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ABSTRACT

The articles reprinted in this silver anniversary issue are a representation of the type of material published during the past 25 years. Among the topics covered are secondary school curriculum, reading skills, composition in the junior high, individual differences in reading programs, vocabulary development in the college classroom, teacher education in language arts, supervision, literary theory and the teaching of literature, literature and tests, and the literature of protest. Authors include Robert C. Pooley, Margaret J. Early, Arno Jewett, Joseph Mersand, Francis X. Connolly, James R. Squire, Alan C. Purves, Jonathon Kozol, and Arthur Daigon. (TO)

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VOL. XXV, No. 4 Fall, 1974

NEW YORK STATE ENGLISH COUNCIL

the English Record

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SILVER ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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Associate Editors: Elizabeth Drake, David Stineback, Marjorie Rogers, Charles Cooper

VOL. XXV **FALL, 1974** **No. 4**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
Editorial	*Richard L. Knudson*	2
The First Ten Years	*Elizabeth J. Drake*	3
Editorial Intimidation: A Twenty-Year Record	*Daniel J. Casey*	7
President's Remarks	*John C. Fisher*	9
Where Are We At?	*Robert C. Pooley*	10
	Volume I, Number 1	
Some Current Issues in English Instruction	*Helene W. Hartley*	21
	Volume II, Number 1	
A Look at the Secondary School Curriculum in English	*Harold C. Martin*	25
	Volume V, Number 3	
Reading Skills for the Forgotten In-Betweens	*Margaret J. Early*	32
	Volume VI, Number 1	
Teaching Composition in the Junior High School	*Robert W. Rounds*	36
	Volume VI, Number 2	
Individual Differences: The Basic Problem in Planning a Junior High School Reading Program	*Elizabeth M. Drews*	41
	Volume VII, Number 2	
The College Program of English Vocabulary	*Leo L. Rockwell*	44
	Volume VII, Number 3	
Goals in Teacher Education Programs for Junior High School Teachers of Language Arts	*Arno Jewett*	50
	Volume VIII, Number 3	
Creative Supervision in the Secondary School	*Joseph Mersand*	62
	Volume IX, Number 2	
Literary Theory and the Teaching of Literature	*Francis X. Connolly*	65
	Volume XII, Number 1	
Learning to Speak and Learning to Read	*Isadore Levine*	71
	Volume XV, Number 2	
Three Ideas about English	*James R. Squire*	78
	Volume XVI, Number 1	
Literature and Tests	*Alan C. Purves*	85
	Volume XVII, Number 1	
Teaching the Literature of Protest	*Maxine Green*	89
	Volume XVIII, Number 1	
A Talk to Teachers	*Jonathan Kozol*	96
	Volume XIX, Number 1	
The Education Game	*Arthur Daigon*	109
	Volume XXIII, Number 2	

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— Editor's Page —

Twenty Five Years of *The English Record*

"I just happened to be here." I have an idea that this simple statement could be used by many people as they honestly assess their participation in history. I know that this is the way it is with me as editor of this twenty fifth anniversary number of *The English Record*.

Original plans called for making this special issue a "Best of *The English Record*" number; however, as I started to go though past issues, I realize how presumptuous this would be. In twenty five years there have been many important pieces published in this journal. To try to identify the best would have been impossible; thus, we have a representation of the sort of material which has been chosen by the previous editors.

I think you will find these articles as provocative today as when they were chosen for first publication. It is easy to see that the concerns of English teachers have not changed all that much, but these concerns bear repeating.

And what of the future? English teachers will continually be concerned with language and helping youngsters gain control of it. As computerization gains in sophistication, I would predict that teachers will become even more concerned with the affective domain. I am convinced that we have the technology to produce a machine which could handle the teaching of subject matter better than a human being. If this is true, the survival of teaching as we know it must depend upon a teacher/student learning situation which goes much further than mere content.

When the New York State English Council celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, there will be many ways to master the subject of English. The organization will continue to be a national leader in effective state professional organizations. As always, there will be concern for students and what is best for them. The next twenty five years will be a time of extreme change in our society; yet, if we keep our sights set on helping students make language work for them, then we will have fulfilled our promise as educators.

The First Ten Years

Elizabeth J. Drake

"Forty-niners" of gold-rush days would certainly approve of their counterparts one hundred years later, but in 1949 we were digging for a different kind of gold, and our immediate goal was an organization. Before 1949 there had been dreams of a State English Council—group discussions of it, letters, proposals, speculative planning. All of these culminated in a westward trek to Buffalo in November, 1949, when the N.C.T.E. held its annual meeting there. Assisted by Harold A. Anderson as N.C.T.E. representative a small but enthusiastic group of New York State English teachers decided to initiate a State Council immediately. Helene Hartley was asked to serve as temporary chairman of the group to plan for a Conference in Syracuse in May, 1950. More planning meetings followed, and a program was organized. This first Conference was a great success, with Robert C. Pooley's "Where are we at?" and Archibald MacLeish's "The Function of Poetry" ringing challengingly in our ears.

From this small group of dedicated pioneers came the Presidents—Elizabeth Drake, the first President, then Strang Lawson, Joseph Mersand, Sister M. Sylvia, Richard Corbin, Milacent Ocvirk, Genevieve Heffron, Earl Harlan, Rosemary Wagner, and Ruth Everett. We pause often in memory of George Dawson, our first Secretary, and William Beauchamp, two of our most faithful workers who died during the last ten years.

The wheels of organization rolled successfully past the making of a constitution, promotion, memberships, and publications. Our objectives, adopted in the Constitution at the May 13, 1950 Conference, were stated as follows:

1. To develop an understanding of the problems that confront the English teachers of New York State at all levels: elementary, secondary, collegiate.

2. To provide unity of action in the solution of our common problems.

3. To promote discussion and study on a local, regional, and statewide basis, with the intention of increasing the understanding of the best practices in English teaching.

4. To strengthen the English program in New York State so that the needs of our students may be met most effectively.

Since May 12 and 13, 1950, when more than 500 English teachers from every section of New York State, representing rural, village, city, and metropolitan areas, as well as all levels of instruction and all

schools, private, parochial and public, assembled to organize the Council, membership has been at a high level. In fact, one year we exceeded 2000.

Indispensable to our success have been the treasurers and their promotion chairmen, the regional and county committees, and other officers too numerous to name. Under the guidance of untiring Sister Sylvia, the first Promotion Chairman, every New York State English teacher of every county has been alerted to the benefits of membership in the Council. Nearly two thousand have continued their interest each year.

No Council can be stronger than its conference programs. Such able chairmen as Strang Lawson, Joseph Mersand, Richard Corbin, Milacent Ocvirk, William Beauchamp, Genevieve Heffron, Rosemary Wagner, Marquerite Driscoll and Marion Thiesen have brought to us the country's authorities in all phases of the language arts program for elementary, secondary, and college teachers. Beginning with 1950, let us recall our giants of the platform: Robert Pooley, Archibald MacLeish; 1951, Dora V. Smith, Angela M. Broening, Mark Van Doren; 1952, Lennox Grey, Harold Anderson, Lou LaBrant, Robert P. Tristram Coffin; 1953, S. I. Hayakawa, John Mason Brown, Harry Oster; 1954, Roma Gans, J. N. Hook, Bernard deVoto; 1955, Alfred Bentall, William D. Boutwell, Robert G. Lee, John Ciardi; 1956, Charles A. Siepmann, Louis Untermeyer; 1957, George N. Shuster, Houston Peterson; 1958, Barry Ulanov, Maurice Dolbier; 1959, Morris Bishop, Charles W. Ferguson.

The "Forty-niners" knew the value of communication and it was only natural that *The English Record* was born in 1950 with Strang Lawson as Editor, a service which he has so ably continued for the decade. Our magazine has won national recognition, and receives many requests for permission to reprint our articles and editorials in various periodicals. The first year's issues were "off-set" and an outline map of New York State was chosen as the official decorative motif. By the second year, an interested printer was found, one who has served well all of our printing needs at a moderate cost.

Through *The Record*, methods, ideas, suggestions, and reports have been distributed to all members, and the most worthwhile addresses at our annual conferences have been preserved. Three issues of *The Record* are printed annually, our own members being the principal contributors of its articles, case studies, methods and devices. Some of these printed materials have eventuated in the form of monographs. Orchids to these authors who helped so much by their creative efforts: Richard Corbin, Richard Decker, Mary E. Holleran, Harold A. Anderson, and the Committees responsible for Monographs No. 5 and No. 6.

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Orders for Monographs have been received from all over the country. For example, orders for Monograph No. 1 have been requested from California, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

A complete index of *The Record* is planned for this anniversary year, but here are a few titles you may wish to reread:

Harry V. Gilson: "Regents Examination—State Policy and Program"
William D. Sheldon: "The Relationship of Failure in Reading to the Adjustment of Children"
Dora V. Smith: "Old Truths and New Directions"
Angela M. Broening: "The Challenge of Individual Differences"
Mark Van Doren: "How Important Is Poetry?"
Lennox Grey: "An Introductory Perspective"
Arno Jewett: "Differing Challenges in the English Language Arts"
Paul H. Kraiss: "A Year in a Greek Provincial High School"
Edwin H. Cady: "What Literature Is Good For"
Marvin D. Glock: "The Teaching of Reading in Grades Four Through Six"
Harold C. Martin: "Look at the Secondary School Curriculum in English"
Charles A. Siepmann: "The Cultural Crisis of Our Time"
Edward R. Fagan: "Teaching Enigmas of *The Old Man and the Sea*"
Barry Ulanov: "The American Temperament and the Humanities"

In addition to *The Record*, the Council brought forth a second publication, the *Newsletter*, issued first in mimeograph form in 1950-1951 by Joseph Mersand, then Chairman of Publicity. This is used as a medium of information for the regional and county leaders who are actively promoting the Council's work in all hamlets and cities of New York State. Our Joe was the Council's third president, and now, in 1959-1960, we salute him as President of The National Council of Teachers of English. Let us meet him in November in Denver. Go West, English teachers, go West!

Today the N.Y.S.E.C. Newsletter is printed on six pages, has pictures and up-to-the-minute news under the editorship of Sister M. Sylvia.

Council Committees have been active throughout this first ten years. Surveys have been made of Regents Examinations, under the leadership of the late Dr. Tressler, succeeded by Dr. Thomas C. Pollock; surveys of certification, spelling, curriculum, constitution, affiliates, teacher load and class size, supervision, elementary language arts, audio-visual aids, teacher recruitment, reading, literary map of N.Y. State, junior memberships, and promotion. Some of these committees are still continuing and will be reported later, no doubt, in monograph form. Special tribute must go to one of our retired pioneers, Harold C. Newton, who worked so arduously on the committee on curriculum.

After careful analysis of the membership distribution, the Council decided to hold its annual conference in various centers of our State in order to interest more teachers. Accordingly we have met once in Buffalo, once in Rochester, and once in New York City. All other times we

have converged on Syracuse, where our initial conference was held in 1950. There it will be held again at the Hotel Syracuse in 1960.

Recently, interest in the Council among undergraduates has made it desirable to form a Junior Council. These junior members have a place on the conference program, have their own officers, and are the enthusiastic replacement members of the future N.Y.S.E.C.

As we have grown, the Council has been confronted with new problems of finance and organization. We have had to increase our membership dues from the dollar of 1950 to two dollars in 1960. Now, as a big leap forward, we have secured Hans Gottschalk to serve as the first paid Executive Secretary. His office will include the duties of the Business Manager which Elizabeth Drake has carried voluntarily during the ten years.

Another continuing function of the Council is the Summer Workshop. Held thus far at Cornell, Geneseo, and Plattsburg, and granting in-service credit, these workshops have drawn teachers from all over the United States. More orchids to the countless Council leaders who have served as organizers, leaders, speakers and instructors in these successful workshops!

Today as we approach 1960, let us not only think backward over a decade of experience to get new insights for the tomorrows of N.Y.S.E.C., but also, let us pause to appreciate the gold we have found. We are rich, indeed! Rich in fellowship, growth, understanding and service to teachers and youth everywhere.

May I conclude this far too short historical sketch, written on the shore of Penobscot Bay, with a poem written especially for this occasion by Elizabeth Coatsworth, famous poet and friend of children everywhere:

TEN YEARS

"Ten years, that's the eager time.
Then the adventures really begin!
A boy's old enough to stand up for himself,
And big enough to go off by himself,
And young enough to find everything interesting,
And new enough to feel happy or unhappy
All the way through to the backbone —
To be ten years old is an exciting thing,
And if for a boy, why not for an idea,
And for its record, *The English Record*,
Which for ten years has honored the written word?"

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Editorial Intimidation: A Twenty-Year Record

If there is anything to strike fear into the heart of the editor-to-be, it is the perusal of the backruns of "his" journal. The immediate response to appointment as editor is, of course, one of enthusiasm and confidence. Even after receiving the twenty-year accumulation of old *Records*, a mere foot in height, the new editor continues to generate ideas, exciting new ideas on content, layout, and changes in editorial policy. But the enthusiasm wanes on closer scrutiny of the faded stack of backruns; "his" journal suddenly takes on communal identity, and in the end there is the realization that it is not "his" at all. Indeed it is "their" journal

Twenty years after—this issue marks the twentieth year of *English Record* publication—this journal is still prestigious among state organs. Over two decades it boasts three fine editors Strang Lawson (Colgate), Earl Harlan (Plattsburg), and Bob Blake (Brockport), a dedicated associate editor, Elizabeth Drake, and a handful of excellent editorial advisors, Richard Corbin, Joseph Mersand, Sister M. Evarista, and the late William Beauchamp. Those assisting in publication have been legion—too many to cite, too important to simply forget. *The English Record* is "theirs."

It is, I think, fair to say that most significant contributors to English Education in the United States have at one time or another been featured in these pages, as have many other prominent American writers. I refer to Robert Pooley and Archibald MacLeish, whose NYSEC addresses appeared in the first number of *The English Record* twenty years ago. And I refer to Dora V. Smith, Mark Van Doren, Arno Jewett, Paul Diederich, Lou LaBrant, Bernard deVoto, J. N. Hook, Margaret Early, William Dusel, Neil Postman, James Squire, and James Sledd, to name but a dozen more. The reputation of *The English Record* has been built on the reputations of these outstanding contributors and on those of the hundreds of others whose manuscripts have shared covers with them. Assuredly this journal is "theirs" too.

Though the familiar outline map of New York State no longer graces the cover, the title *The New York State English Council English Record* reminds the reader that *The English Record* belongs to the Council, and in a special way it belongs to the "Forty-niners," the small band of pioneers who launched the Council in 1949-50. In a very real sense this journal belongs to past editors, contributors, founders of NYSEC, and to three thousand members who have supported it over a score of years.

Is it any wonder that the editor-to-be is intimidated? Strang Lawson "off-set" several hundred copies of a forty page publication in 1950, a

publication that featured Pooley and MacLeish, and Bob Blake printed a journal two and half times that size in 1970 that featured Rod Jacobs and other Chomsky transformationalists. *The English Record* reaches more than ten times the readership it did twenty-years ago. The content, layout, and the editorial policy appear more than adequate, and to be truthful the new editor finds it difficult to lift the foot high stack of backruns. A twenty-year tradition of excellence is a tough act to follow.

I should like to begin, then, with kudos to my intimidators, and a special dedication of this issue to Elizabeth J. Drake, First President of NYSEC and Associate Editor of *The English Record* and to the founders of the Council, whose credits gratefully are noted in a reproduction of the inside cover from the first number.

Daniel J. Casey

MONOGRAPH NUMBER THIRTEEN

English Teaching in New York State Public Schools*

By

Roger L. Cayer, N.Y.U.

John E. Reedy, S.U.C., Buffalo

Profile of the N.Y.S. English Teacher

Preparation of the English Teacher

Subjects Taught in Secondary School English

Recommendations for School Districts and Colleges

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Philip J. West

Department of English

Skidmore College

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*Research Sponsored by the Research Committee of NYSEC with a Grant from N.Y.U.

President's Message

One cannot help but stand in awe of the past when one contemplates the future of an organization like ours, which for twenty five years has been firmly dedicated to excellence in education. Teacher-scholars in this state's university and public school classrooms have, for a quarter of a century, come together in the Council's publications, conferences, and committees to exchange ideas, and ultimately to participate in the greatest of challenges, the teaching of the young.

On our twenty-fifth anniversary I salute those who have come before us, those who are here now, and, most importantly, those who are destined to take our place—our own students. In making them worthwhile, we make the future of our profession worthwhile.

John C. Fisher
State University College at Oswego
President, New York State English Council

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Where Are We At?

Professor Robert C. Pooley

In the title of my address you may detect a faint note of humor. Humor is intended, but neither scorn nor derision. The phrase "where are we at?" is an illustration of the triumph of psychology over logic in language usage. It is indeed the victory of rhythm over grammar. The title of my address is, therefore, not only a title but is a symbol of the text.

In spite of the ancient and dubious rule that a sentence may not end with a preposition, or as one grammarian is alleged to have put it, "A preposition is a bad thing to end a sentence with," the English language and the people who speak English have favored the short interrogation ending with the preposition. Intimate conversation would be robbed of a valuable pattern were we prohibited from saying "Who is it by?", "Where is it from?", "What is it for?", etc. So fixed is this pattern as a form of interrogation that the people who are more interested in communication than in grammar have created the happy phrase, "Where is it at?" You will note that this phrase permits the emphasis to fall upon the terminal preposition as it does in the other more orthodox phrases. To shift the pattern to "Where is it?" requires mental and physical effort. There is no doubt in my mind that the familiarity of the pattern and the ease of articulation will establish "Where is it at?" as one of the idioms of standard English. After all, it is no more absurd than "How do you do?", or "This is why I came."

Some day a cultural historian will write the story of teaching of English in the United States. It will be a document of extreme pedagogical and psychological interest. This historian will reveal that the teaching of English has passed through periods of great self-assurance and equally perplexed doubt. When he reaches the period in which we are now teaching, he will hesitate between the terms confusion and chaos for the heading of his chapter. I shall attempt to sketch briefly the epochs of English teaching which will form a part of his history.

The teaching of English in a really professional manner in the United States may be said to have had its origins in Webster's BLUE-BACKED SPELLER and the American edition of Lindley Murray's ENGLISH GRAMMAR. In other words, we may begin our story in the last decade of the 18th century. From this point to approximately 1850, where the milestone is the publication of Gould Brown's colossal GRAMMAR OF ENGLISH GRAMMARS, may be called the period of origins. It was in this era that school masters discovered that English grammar could take the place of Latin grammar as a discipline for the training of young minds. It was in this period that various extractions were made from the great classics to form the rudiments of a canon of English literature in which the inculcation of moral virtues was a goal of

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at least equal importance with high literary quality. In this era the teaching of grammar as a wholesome discipline for the soul was nicely established by Lindley Murray and successfully continued by his imitators. Gould Brown's book of more than 1,000 pages was merely the capstone of the edifice.

We may call our second era the period of standardization. It was between 1850 and 1910 that teachers of English enjoyed the greatest degree of assurance as to the rightness of what they were doing. Grammar was grammar. It began in about the third grade of what was then called the grammar school and went on through the eighth grade. A student in high school was supposed to know his English grammar but was brushed up and polished off in his fourth year prior to taking the college entrance board examinations. The study of literature consisted almost entirely of those classics which the college entrance board had selected and announced as the required readings for a given year. The teachers knew what to teach and how to teach it in order to get the students through the examinations, and apparently everyone was fairly happy with the scheme. The colleges of this period expected students to know their grammar and felt there was no nonsense about it. The college curriculum in literature made no bow to contemporary works. A course in English literature usually wound up not long after Wordsworth and a very few American literature courses, daring innovations of the period, scarcely got beyond Whitman. In the heyday of this period apparently no one questioned what the teacher did and he could continue to do what he was doing year after year without criticism.

Nevertheless, the seeds of revolt were already sown around the turn of the century. By 1910 the period of revolt was under way and it lasted until 1930. It was in this time that several basic elements of the English canon were challenged. The validity of grammar as a mental discipline was challenged, the age at which children were to be taught grammar was challenged, the ability of grammar to bring about better composition was challenged, the stuffiness of the literary transition was challenged, the college English entrance examinations were challenged, and the literary tradition as a whole was attacked on many counts. The general unreality of English teaching was challenged; its apparent lack of relationship to the lives and interests of young people formed the chief basis of attack. Among the important documents of this period was that declaration of independence entitled "The Reorganization of English in Secondary Schools," a report published in 1911 and sponsored cooperatively by The National Council of Teachers of English and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Our National Council was in at the beginning of the revolt and it maintained the leadership throughout the period of challenge.

The era of revolt led quite naturally to a period of expansion which could be dated from 1930 to 1945. It was in this period that English apparently fell heir to everything which educators felt that children should have and which did not fall naturally into any other area of the

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curriculum. This is the period in which the newspaper, the magazine, the popular book, detective fiction, silent motion pictures, talking motion pictures, radios, the electrified phonograph, and finally, television became a part of the English teacher's job. To these were added instruction in speech, both private and public, debate, the conduct of public meetings, drama, and various clubs for the propagation of creative writing. In colleges all sorts of experiments with the curriculum marked the period. Freshmen began to read contemporary literature, popular books, and contemporary magazines as their required reading. The course in composition began to expand itself into communication. It added to composition various phases of speech and the skills of silent and oral reading. In this period of expansion the English teacher took unto himself plenty.

This period brings us almost up to today. As I said at the opening, it is hard to decide between the terms confusion and chaos as characteristic of our present situation. We have on the one hand scientific linguistic knowledge beyond anything known to our predecessors. We have the theoretical and practical "know-how" to do a superior job of instruction in our language and literature. On the other hand we have the survival in practice of practically every known ancient method, procedure and point of view. A student can pass in dizzy progression from a puristic authoritarian to a linguistic neologist. He can be told within the span of 30 minutes that anyone who splits an infinitive is a barbarian and that anyone who opposes the splitting of an infinitive is an antiquarian. Not only does this confusion apply to the unhappy undergraduate but it equally influences the prospective high school and college teacher. Pushed this way and that by the various forces of transition, inertia, and linguistic observation, he forms convictions on half truths or emerges a soul-weary cynic. What to do about this situation is our concern here today.

When Robinson Crusoe found himself in what we should call today a tough spot, one of the first things he did was to sit down and make an inventory of his resources and his liabilities. When he finished it, he acknowledged gaining a great sense of relief and comfort. Now actually his situation did not change at all, but his analysis of it did. The very act of facing the worst and making the most of the good prepared him to find his way toward a sane and reasonable solution to his problem. We cannot undertake as clear-cut an inventory as was made by Robinson Crusoe because our situation is too complex, but I would like to analyze with you some of our basic assets and liabilities.

To change my illustration, you will remember the scene in DAVID COPPERFIELD when David, after tramping from London to Dover, has at last arrived in his aunt's house, dirty, tearful, and exhausted. Aunt Betsey, struggling with astonishment, annoyance and pity, turns in desperation to Mr. Dick and says, "Mr. Dick, what shall we do with this boy?" You will recall that Mr. Dick says, calmly and triumphantly, "Give him a bath." Mr. Dick's common sense and grasp of the im-

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mediate thing to be done could be well applied to some of our current perplexities in the teaching of English. As I shall point out in a few moments, we have plenty of theory but we are often sorrily in need of practical common sense.

I propose now to review quickly our resources in the various areas of English instruction, with the hope of establishing the fact that although we have the knowledge we need, we have not as yet fully, or in some cases even partially, availed ourselves of it.

I begin then with English grammar. In 1894 the Danish scholar Otto Jespersen announced his brilliant thesis that change in language is not corruption but improvement. He made this statement with particular attention to English. He showed that the changes which had taken place and were taking place were almost entirely in the direction of simplification of the language and increased efficiency of its use. He fired the first big gun at the purists who opposed change on the grounds that changes corrupt the language and depreciate its efficiency in communication.

Following this analysis Jespersen published a series of papers to show that English grammar was very badly described by the system which had been largely created in the 18th century. The system was based upon Latin grammar and tried to force English into the pattern of the classics, a pattern not congenial to the spirit of our language. As a result of this artificial pattern, English grammar teaching had about it a great deal of artificiality because rules were created to change the habits of the language on the basis of external considerations rather than upon the genius of the language itself. In 1924 Jespersen published his PHILOSOPHY OF GRAMMAR in which he presented a scheme for the description of English grammar in terms of pure function. In 1933 one of his American disciples, Janet Rankin Aiken, offered a modification of the Jespersen plan for use in American schools and colleges. In 1940 she joined in collaboration with Margaret Bryant to show the psychological bases of English grammar and to plead for a recognition of these factors in the description of the language. In spite of this sound and solid scholarship, the 18th century tradition of English grammar continues almost unchanged, leaving us with an ever widening gap between the sound conclusions of our linguistic scholars and the archaic method of teaching the structure of our language. To these studies should be added that of Charles Carpenter Fries in his AMERICAN ENGLISH GRAMMAR. Ignoring formal categories entirely and studying the actual use of English from an enormous sampling of all levels of English, Fries developed a descriptive plan of English as it is, a study in startling contrast with the traditional picture of grammar. I feel it possible to assert firmly that we have sound and reputable scholarship to revolutionize the manner in which we present the grammar of our language in schools and colleges. But as yet we have barely touched this scholarship. High school teachers, college teachers, and those who train teachers still perpetuate the unscientific, largely haphazard grammatical system of

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the 18th century. When will we abandon this liability and utilize our genuine resources?

The story of English usage is quite similar to that of English grammar with the exception that we have made greater progress in this area. In the latter part of the 19th century a number of observers pointed out that the prescriptive rules of English grammar prohibited constructions and idioms of English which were regularly used by educated people. These rebels insisted that usage established the rules and not rules the usage. For the most part they were shouted down and made little impression upon their contemporaries. Interest in this rebellion increased slowly in the 20th century and reached its peak in the 1920's. It was in this decade that Professor Fries published a series of papers pointing out the discrepancies between 18th century rules and current English practice. It was in this decade that Sterling Leonard conducted the largest research yet undertaken in the field of usage which resulted in the National Council publication entitled CURRENT ENGLISH USAGE. In this same decade he undertook the research which led to his book THE DOCTRINE OF CORRECTNESS IN ENGLISH USAGE, 1700 to 1800, a scholarly milestone in the study of usage. His friends and disciples amplified his work in the 1930's and an increasing number of linguistically sound textbooks testified to the influence of the work of this group. Nevertheless, the battle is not yet won. Not long ago a well-written textbook in freshman composition, by an author whose name would be familiar to you, was rejected in the largest state teachers college of a midwestern state because the author admitted that although "it is I" is grammatically correct, "it's me" has largely taken its place. The authorities of this particular college would not risk corrupting the minds of its future teachers with such heresy. Yet these are the teachers who are now in the high schools of that state. What, we may well ask, will be their attitude toward usage? It is not at all an unusual circumstance in a high school or college today for a student to spend a semester with one teacher who not only tolerates but perhaps encourages the use of idiomatic expressions established, or partially established, in current English, only to move the next semester to a teacher who red-inks and penalizes his compositions for the use of such expressions. As Caxton querulously remarked 600 years ago, "Truly, what shall a man say?" We have come a long way in English usage but we are by no means of one mind with regard to its principles, nor do we present a common front to the public. If the leadership waivers, who will follow?

At the heart of our instruction, through the history of English teaching, has been the work in composition. Although the purposes of composition have differed from period to period, the importance of writing in the teaching of English has never until recently been questioned. In the lush 1920's a method of educational research known as the "case method" developed. By this method one achieved information by observing enormous numbers of cases and deriving generalizations from the observations. For example, if one wanted to

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produce a good teacher the way to do it was to study a thousand teachers to analyze what they did, to generalize from their actions, and then to teach prospective teachers to perform these actions. When this procedure became established in teacher training it was discovered that the method captured the shell but lost the heart. No matter how many tricks you taught a prospective teacher, she still was not a good teacher unless there was something else there that could not be described in statistical terms. A similar misconception arose from the case study of language use. Because people speak very much more than they write, said the observers, the schools should give almost all their attention to oral English. Never was there a more egregious fallacy. The assumption was that the only reason for teaching writing was to prepare an adult to write papers, reports, and other documents. Any good teacher of English knows that this outcome is only one of the many goals of English composition. We are concerned with the development of adequate sentence structure with exactness and elegance of phrasing which can come only in the more leisurely undertaking of writing, the development of clear and logical thinking, and the enlargement of scope which permits a student to continue an idea, argument, or opinion over a considerable length of time and space. These factors are not only important in teaching the student to write effectively in his adult life, but they are basic to the general education of every student.

Through the 19th century the English composition was largely a formal essay. It was academic in character and dealt with rather abstract subjects. With the growth of the public schools and the influences of a large number of students with less than normal skill in English usage, the English composition tended to become an exercise in grammar and usage. In the earlier decades of this century a great many teachers utilized the composition to find out what errors students made in writing. The case study method gave rise to the theory that if students' errors were corrected, they would write good compositions. Some of that spirit still carries into the present. Nevertheless, we have seen in the last decade the growth and acceptance of the value of the concept of communication. This concept has taught us that the purpose of speech and writing is to convey ideas clearly and effectively from one person to another. It has shifted the emphasis from merely mechanical accuracy and precise diction to the transference of idea in a form and style appropriate to and most effective in the situation for which it is intended. This enlargement of our scope has had a powerful and beneficial effect upon composition. It has brought writing back to the communicative needs of the student. It has promoted a common sense attitude toward writing which was lacking in earlier methods. It has tended to show the student the values of appropriateness and the various uses to which language is put in active adult life. These gains, although excellent, are by no means universal. There are still many high schools in which the only attention given to composition is to mark errors. There are still theme assignments made which bear no relationship to the communicative needs and interests of the students. There are many college instructors who, of their own voli-

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tion or by direction of their superiors, put a failure on a paper which has a grammatical or usage error. Such procedures violate the doctrine of communication and set back our progress in composition. How can we as a profession win over our own colleagues, and present a united front to students and the public? How can we expect the most valuable aspect of English instruction to be universally respected until we ourselves are sure of what we are doing?

My time will not permit as full a development of the history of reading instruction as the subject warrants. I can omit many details with confidence inasmuch as most of us are familiar with the development of a system of measurement in the skills of reading. These measurements revealed, and have now established beyond question, what many of us were aware of in a vague way earlier. They show that any large group of students of approximately the same age and status in school have a range in reading ability from almost illiteracy to superior adult skill. We know, for instance, that any ninth grade entering a large school will contain students who cannot read above the sixth grade level and some who may be superior in speed and comprehension to the high school teacher herself. We know that any college freshman group will contain students for whom the basic textbooks are too simple and elementary and a similar number of students who cannot comprehend what they read in the same books. Although this knowledge has been commonplace for nearly a decade, we are extremely slow to do anything much about it. A small number of high schools are now attempting some form of remedial instruction for those students who are alarmingly deficient in reading. Almost no high school has yet dared to say to the student and his parents, "Because you are so deficient in reading it will take you five or six years to complete the high school course." We pretend that by a little coaching from the harrassed and overworked teacher the student with four or five years retardation in reading can be made in a short time into a normal high school student. Deep down within us we know that such a supposition is ridiculous. Yet what have we actually done in a realistic and common sense way to meet this realistic and common sense problem? In our colleges we have established here and there a reading clinic which is in the nature of a booster shot for the deficient student. The intention is laudable and the results are in many cases very gratifying. Nevertheless, large numbers of students still enter college greatly deficient in the power to read and receive not only no help and instruction in the art of reading, but are often times not even informed of the actual nature of the deficiency. Colleges assume and exercise the right to reject from college a student whose physical health does not permit his regular and successful performance of college studies. Except for a few private institutions we have not yet dared to reject the student whose mental condition with respect to reading comprehension is such that he cannot similarly profit from college instruction. I think that we are struggling honestly toward a suitable answer to this difficulty but we need more understanding and agreement among ourselves and a more unified front in the matter to our fellow educators. Surely we who are the

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guardians, as it were, of those skills of communication which make learning possible must strive for some standards, or at least agreements, concerning minimum competence to perform at the various levels of learning. The resources are available. We have the research, the experience, and the techniques of improvement. We have not yet solved the practical problems of who is to be taught what, where, and by whom in the vitally important area of reading.

The teaching of literature suffers from as much confusion in basic principle as does the teaching of language, but the confusion is more easily concealed. If pupils in a high school class are kept quiet and out of mischief by the perusal of LIFE MAGAZINE or the organized study of the READERS DIGEST, no one is particularly disturbed, least of all the principal who in theory is supposed to watch over the curriculum of his school. What is taught in literature classes today is the product of a long series of influences, some from the distant past and some very immediate. From the 19th century we have inherited the fairly standard list of selections from the great writers which still forms the backbone of English literature instruction both in high school grades and in the first two years of college. This tradition of literature was crystalized by the college entrance examinations of the last part of the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th. Textbook writers and anthologists gathered together the selections of literature which appeared most frequently on the examination lists and built up therefrom a fairly consistent canon of literature. Another segment in the list of our materials is the product of the period of expansion. It is in this time that the short story and the light essay became a definite part of the literary tradition. To these basic types could be added a large number of other materials, the literary and semi-literary magazines, daily newspapers, news weeklies, motion picture scripts, radio scripts, and jokes from the NEW YORKER MAGAZINE. Everything I mention here has appeared in one or more high school anthologies of what is technically termed literature. To these two sources can be added a third influence, perhaps the product of the two wars of recent years. It is the tremendous emphasis upon contemporary literature. The student is supposed to profit most from the immediate interpretation of his contemporary society as he sees it in the books, magazines, and newspapers dealing with the present day.

To this confusion we can bring less help from specific research than in the areas of language and composition. There are few classic studies of the literary interests and capabilities of high school and young college students. We shall have to take most of our guidance from the studies in reading which have made a few principles perfectly clear. The first of these is so trite that I would blush to mention it here were it not for its constant violation in our school and college programs. The principle is that without comprehension on the part of the student no amount of exposure to a given piece of literature has any beneficial effect. It may have, and indeed often does have, the negative effect of driving him from all pleasure in literature. The materials derived from the traditional list of

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English classics are most apt to offend in this regard though some contemporary materials are not free from the same complaint. To put it very simply, unless the author of a piece of writing can talk to the students who read his book, we are doing neither author nor students any good. Reading research gives us a second basic principle, that comprehension arises from the association of previous experiences with new experiences. Translated into terms of teaching literature, this means that any selection we put before a typical group of young people should have in it a majority of experiences to which they can respond without undue strain. Mingled with these known experiences should be new ones which can be interpreted and comprehended by association. The literature, then, should have hooks of recognition which the student can grasp and which give him the support necessary to make his way through the new experiences. The third principle is equally simple. What we call appreciation is a combination of emotional and intellectual responses which arise from recognition and association. When the material affords a maximum of recognition and association the student can respond with what we call appreciation. When he finds very little familiar to grasp and is bewildered by an excessive number of new and unfamiliar experiences, he lacks comprehension and therefore cannot gain either enjoyment or appreciation. These principles seem self-evident, but one may search far to find high school or basic college courses in literature planned with these principles uppermost.

It is evident that in this analysis of the teaching of literature there is no conflict between classics and modern literature. Some portions of the great literature of the past speak directly and eloquently to students and are more easily comprehended than some contemporary pieces. Both the past and the present have a place in the curriculum, but the principle of selection must be in terms of what the literature can do for the student and not in terms of what we think is good for him. Literature thus viewed is an aspect of communication. Our duty and our opportunity is to bring about communication between the great minds of the past and the young minds before us. Considering the very wide range of quality in the minds now before us in the typical classroom, we shall have to make important modifications in the traditional materials of literature presented to students.

In our hasty survey of our resources and liabilities, we have examined some of the principal areas of what are now being called the language arts. We are at the point where it becomes appropriate to ask again our initial question, "Where are we at?" Only a few weeks ago there appeared in the ATLANTIC MONTHLY an article by a Mr. Albert Lynd which made a caustic attack upon teacher training in general and English teacher training in particular. It would be charitable to say that Mr. Lynd was misinformed and prejudiced. His statements can be and have been brilliantly refuted by Professor Lennox Grey and by many others. While we recognize that Mr. Lynd's attack is unfair, we must nevertheless grant that it is symptomatic of a segment of public opinion.

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The confusion of theory and practice which exists in our profession is matched by a greater confusion of our aims and purposes in the minds of the public. That is why I feel it of tremendous importance at the present time that we clear our own confusions by the acceptance of two well-established principles, and second that we organize effectively to make these principles effective among our students and with the public.

The first basic principle I think follows naturally from my analysis of our current situation. The best name I can apply to it is professional alertness. I mean by it the employment of those patterns of thought and behavior that distinguish the professional man from the unprofessional. For example, few of us would consult a doctor who had not been to a lecture of his medical society or who had not read and digested a professional journal for a period of several years. We would consider him hopelessly out of date and even though he might have been very well trained in his student days, we would consider his neglect to keep abreast of the times a sign of unprofessional character. If we read in the READERS DIGEST the discovery of a new specific for one of the diseases which plague mankind, we expect our physician to be ready to use it immediately or shortly after. If on consultation we find he knows nothing about it, we censure him in our thoughts. We expect the attorney who deals with matters of taxation or the conveyance of property to be aware of and to act upon the latest legislation of national and state governing bodies. We are inclined to be exceedingly critical of any lack of professional alertness on his part. Should the doctor or lawyer and other professionals turn their attention to us as teachers of English, would they find a comparable professional alertness? I leave the answer to you. Here are some of the outward signs. The first is the subscription to and faithful reading of the leading professional journals in our own field. The subscription lists of the ENGLISH JOURNAL and of COLLEGE ENGLISH for New York State seem to indicate that not every professionally employed teacher is a subscriber. The second sign is the ability to read the articles of a professional journal so as to find those that represent fundamental research and advancement in our work. Most of the research that I have cited earlier in this talk appeared originally in our journals or was reported there. Much of it was scarcely noted at the time of its appearance and has had very little influence upon our work. The third demonstration of professional alertness is an attitude of mind. It is a characteristic of flexibility, the readiness to change point of view and method when one is convinced of the significance of a new idea or a new procedure. This quality which we admire and commend in our professional brethren—the doctor, the lawyer, and the engineer—we are often too prone to scoff at in our own profession. Constrained by inertia and tradition, we tend to lose our mental flexibility and with it our professional alertness, without which we are apt to end in stagnation.

The second principle on which I feel we can come to a common agreement is that our primary concern in teaching English is to develop

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the art of communication. From this essential point of view the contributory parts of our instruction fall into their proper subordination. Usage, for example, is the determination of what is customary, appropriate, and most effective in any given linguistic situation. Mechanics become the study not of forms established by authority but of the observation of how modern English is written or printed with due allowance for such variation as may occur. Grammar becomes the science of reporting how the English language works here and now. If we could unitedly agree upon such a fundamental principle much of our own confusion would disappear, much of the rubbish we have carried forward from the 18th and 19th centuries could be discarded, and our chief goal, clear and effective communication, would be obvious not only to us but to the public by whom we are employed. I realize that put in this brief way the principle is oversimplified. Nevertheless, the genuine acceptance of such a point of view as a universal premise of our profession could work wonders.

I turn now to the question of organization. No profession can exist as such unless its members are united for effective communication among themselves. Great teachers can and do arise in complete isolation but as such they do not constitute a profession. Our presence here today is the illustration of my final point. New York State teachers of English, for many years organized in local and regional groups, have made valuable contributions to our teaching. Some of the best research in elementary school and secondary school English has been conducted in New York State. Some of the leading writers and research workers of our profession live in this State and exercise their influence here. Nevertheless, today marks an occasion of gratification to us all, that over and above the local and regional organizations which our profession has enjoyed so far, New York State is now united in this State organization which has its inauguration today. It is my privilege and honor as a native New Yorker and a member of our profession to congratulate you upon this organization and to anticipate with certainty the advancement in the teaching of English in this State which it will bring about. I believe I also have the privilege of extending to you the congratulations of The National Council of Teachers of English whom I represent as a past president and an unofficial representative at this meeting. This organization means union for common understanding, for specific improvement of our tasks, and for a professional presentation of our position to the public. In other words, it is a sign that we begin to know "where we are at."

Some Current Issues in English Instruction

Helene W. Hartley

Wherever changing conditions call for new procedures, or where it is necessary to adapt the old to purposes not originally foreseen, there issues abound. At present, teachers of English at every level of instruction are faced with such change and with new requirements. Out of consequent uncertainties, three issues appear as both general and crucial.

The first concerns the relation of English to other areas of the curriculum. Shall it be taught as a separately organized subject, with its own specialized purposes, its own unique contribution to the sum total of the educated person? Or shall it be taught in conjunction with other subjects to which it is clearly related in content or purpose?

For example, is literature so clearly a record of man's progress as he seeks to evolve a society and a culture that it can be best interpreted in the light of history and the social sciences? Is it, even, a means by which these sciences of society can be taught? Or is literature so closely allied with the other fine arts, through which men from the beginning have sought to convey their perceptions of truth and beauty, that it can best be understood and appreciated when studied with the other arts?

Again, is effective control of speaking and writing best to the end of improvement in general? For example, is the "composition," the "oral topic," presented as a basis for general criticism, the best route to effectiveness? Or are these skills better acquired as modes of communication in situations requiring them—where need for effectiveness is clearly felt, where the means for achieving it in that particular situation are studied and practiced, and where successful communication, or the failure of it, provides an immediate and genuine evaluation base? What situations in each area of the curriculum and in the activities of the school provide such opportunity to learn to speak and write effectively?

These are but a few facets of this first basic issue — English as a separate subject, organized for study according to its own subdivisions of content and skill, or English taught in the context of related areas of the curriculum that provide interpretation and motive beyond what can be provided through English alone.

At all levels of instruction experimentation in integrating English with other subjects is taking place. In the elementary grades, large units of instruction require that techniques of speaking, writing, and reading be taught in order to carry out the larger purpose of the unit or project. In the high school, integration of English with the social sciences is

perhaps most generally undertaken. Here experience has demonstrated that a mere fitting together of one course of study with another, if either is formalized or functionless, can accentuate futility. Integration must start with a fresh and realistic consideration of outcomes to be sought and of the way by which the related subject matters can be used to achieve these ends, with a vitalizing of each. In such integrations the dreaded "handmaiden role" of either subject will not become an issue. In colleges, too, particularly where general education is sought, English instruction is being provided through broad courses in communications, the humanities, and in social areas such as American life and culture.

A second issue is closely allied with the first. Shall we cease to concern ourselves primarily with the mastery of English, alone or through integration with other subjects, and instead regard it as a vast reservoir of skills and values and insights to be used along with many others in meeting the basic social and individual needs of students? Shall reading, writing, speaking, and listening be used as means for learning how to succeed in family life, in coming to grips with the economic world, in solving one's emotional conflicts, in improving human relations? Out of such proposals arise the core-curriculum and life-adjustment programs.

Aside from these questions that concern the English curriculum, a third issue, or group of issues, centers around the question of *how*. By what content and by what procedures, whatever the curriculum design, can the values and skills of English be acquired? For example, shall classic or modern literature be stressed? What is the value of a systematic study of the structure, or grammar, of our language? How can an understanding of language as a social force be gained? What place have radio, motion pictures, television in English instruction? To what extent can pupils plan their work and evaluate it?

In meeting issues such as these, there is almost equal danger in a timid or closed-minded adherence to familiar practice and in too quick acceptance of half-understood concepts. A thoughtful analysis of problems, of purposes and objectives; acquaintance with recent scholarship that gives more profound understanding of the nature of our subject; use of the results of careful experimentation; exchange of experience; and most of all a sincere attempt to try, and test, and weigh—through such approaches rather than mere verbal controversy will solution of current issues emerge.

THE CHALLENGE OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES—

read each one as a communication telling you about the writer. If you ever get a dull piece of writing from a student, it is due to mis-education. To every human being writing should be as engaging an experience as talking — as talking when you are talking about something that matters. The challenge of individual differences in terms of writing is the challenge of getting to know each student you teach as an individual, to know his interest, his anxieties, his past failures and successes, and what's on his mind now. In the right kind of classroom situation you get personalized communication that reveals those concerns.

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Even 'way back in kindergarten you can find out things about the individual children if you are alert. I want to read to you a piece of a little play that some youngsters were doing in the corner of the kindergarten over by the playhouse one morning. Of course it was spontaneous. This is what happened:

Audrey says: "I am the mother" and Valerie says: "Why not the biggest for the mother, I am the biggest," and Sandy says: "No, you are just out of High School." Valerie: "No, I am the mother." Sandy: "Mothers are medium size, you are too big, mothers are next to the biggest." Frances: "You can be the teacher of the school." Sandy: "Caroline is the mediumist." (You know what the linguists would say? That child in the kindergarten has the sense of the comparative. If we live long enough this may even come into style.) Caroline is the mediumist she says, she is the mother, and Doris is the littlest, she is the baby. Audrey: "They all go to school." She is the teacher, pointing to Valerie: "She goes to school, we don't go to school, we stay at home." Frances: "Where will I go?" Audrey: "You are supposed to go to college. College is over there." Caroline: "Now father," pointing to one of the boys, "You stay here until breakfast, after breakfast then you go to work. You can read the paper now." (See the home life?) Frances: "This is the school, now come over here. Here is the teacher. Where is that teacher gone? Come over here, Valerie, this is the school." (You notice her personality as well as her language and her ideas.) Caroline: "Now get the breakfast. Here Sandy, you break the eggs for me — open the door, get me a spoon. No, father, don't come out yet, breakfast isn't ready. Oh, I haven't any milk. Come here, Sandy, go to the store for me, get me two quarts of milk." Frances: "Where is my teacher?" Audrey: "You're in college, you don't have a teacher." Frances: "I don't want to be in college, I want to go over to school where there are some other people." (She is not one of those isolationists.) Jimmie, who is the father, says: "Is breakfast ready yet? I will be late for work." (Have you ever heard that? Caroline says: "No father, suppose you make a fire," and he goes over to make the fire, and Bobby, who is the grandfather says: "I love to sit at the fire and toast my toes" and Caroline says: "Come on everybody, breakfast is ready," and then she says to Caroline: "Use your napkin, baby, you will get cereal on your dress and I just ironed it yesterday," and Doris says: "Yes, mother," and Jimmie says: "My, my, what lovely pancakes." (Would you like to marry him if you could, girls? He notices the kind of food and he compliments the overworked wife who is doing the cooking.) Audrey: "O, I dropped mine on the floor." Caroline: "Don't eat it— don't eat it, here is another." Jimmie: "Well, goodbye everybody, I have to go to work, I'll catch the bus." Caroline: "Come children, you must go to school. Do you have your news?" (See, it's a modern school.) "Do you have your news? Be good children and watch the patrol boys." The children all call "Goodbye, Mother." Frank, who is the postman, steps up and puts a letter in the mail box. Bobby runs to get the letter and then says: "Maybe it is for me" and then he looks at it. "Just a bill," and he tosses it to one side — (kindergarten). Caroline: "I will have to wash the dishes. Oh, how I hate to wash dishes," and she starts to hum. All the children and the father come home again and she says to all of them "It isn't time for you to come home, I am just doing the breakfast dishes."

So, as children play together, as they talk, as they read, as they write, they provide us with information about their interests and individual needs. They would be learning a lot about English even if they didn't come to school, but in the time they are with us they can learn more quickly, more permanently, more effectively, how to speak, to read, to write, to listen, and to look, with discrimination, taste, and ability to communicate. In doing this job we can find definite aids in questionnaires, tests, and inventories; but let's not forget: get to know the children.

One important device any teacher can use is grouping children within a class, to teach them better than keeping them all together. We used to think we were meeting individual needs if, after giving standardized tests, we formed a "homogeneous" group by cutting off the extremes. But you can make a group homogeneous with respect to one factor and they will still be different with respect to most other factors; even with "homogeneous" grouping the teacher still has to individualize the work within the group.

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Even if you could afford it, you wouldn't want one teacher for every pupil. That illusion of Mark Hopkins on one end of a log, and one student on the other, might have been appropriate for a rustic age, but in our kind of society we have to learn to work together. Language is social behavior, and you must teach language in social situations corresponding to those of real life. We should separate into small or large groups, the length of time depending on interest and instructional need. I learned early, from my own mistakes, that each group should have some common interest to begin with, that the youngsters themselves should help to plan group activity, and that until you have developed pupil leadership it's best not to have too many groups at one time.

The great challenge to the teacher is to remain awake—that is, alert to the clues of readiness for experience, helpful in getting young people to associate words with non-verbal experience, appreciative of their attempts at communication, responsive to their needs and interests.

The job of teaching the language arts is one of releasing the individual's language potential, of cultivating his talents, of correcting his imperfections. We should try to develop in him attitudes favorable to:

1. lively conversation and correspondence —
2. reading as a study procedure and a source of recreation —
3. courteous and discriminating listening, to capture the speaker's meaning, to sense his purpose, and to remember accurately whatever the listener may wish to remember.
4. speaking, for all the occasion and all the listeners are worth —
5. observing, with all his senses alert to the significant and the beautiful in life and in art.

A Look At The Secondary School Curriculum In English

Harold C. Martin

In one sense, I feel some trepidation at presuming to talk about what I *expect* from students who have finished their high school work in English. Like you, I am accustomed to taking what I get and starting to work with what is, not what ought to be. Yet it is certainly not idle to speculate on what ought to be, and that I take to be my function here. Having taken the ideal as my prerogative, therefore, I feel that I may as well go the whole way and push my topic from the general to the specific, altering it thereby from what a college teacher of English *expects* to what a college teacher of English—this one, at any rate—believes should be the components and emphasis of the high school program in English.

Let me assure you, at the outset, that I am aware of the Protean character of the student groups with whom you work and familiar, too, with the diverse needs and demands of the modern secondary school. My seven years as a teacher and five as an administrator in the schools of this state may not have given me much wisdom, but they certainly did give me a sense of the impressively difficult problems of secondary school work and a harrowing realization of the need for solutions to them. Those problems are not peculiar to secondary schools, of course, but they are the most acute in secondary schools because no part of the educational system has to face so great a variety of interests, preoccupations, and drives as come to the surface in the turbulent years of students growing into their 'teens. On the other hand, no part of the system is privileged to accommodate so great a wealth of energy, curiosity, and unpredictableness as the secondary schools. Everything is at hand for a great piece of work in the teaching of English; but not many of us, I think, would be willing to say that, except in a few places in the state, a really great job is being done.

In some measure, all of us share the blame, but turning one's gun on oneself or on one's fellow is useful only if we make sure not to pull the trigger. We may, it is true, have to have something like a civil war within our own ranks before we can settle down to the job of reconstruction. It is my hope that it can be a war of principles — not merely of words, and it is to such a war that I dedicate these remarks.

First, let us face squarely this question: how bad is the teaching of English in secondary schools today? Will you agree if I say that I think it

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is bad? Will you agree if I say that I think a better job is being done in the teaching of science, of mathematics, of music, and even, perhaps, of social studies? Perhaps you will not, but I would not be honest to say that I think otherwise. At any rate, let me take that as a premise.

To mitigate the pain a bit, let me spread the picture, make this into a Cinemascope projection. I have just finished reading a good many seminar papers by graduate students, most of them graduate students in English, who are applying for fellowships to teach freshman English at Harvard. Of every four candidates, I have had to reject one on this ground alone: that the candidate did not write clearly enough, forcefully enough, perceptively enough to warrant my feeling he could successfully help freshmen to write better. Now a step down the scale. At the end of each marking period, instructors in Harvard's freshman English course write a brief analysis of the cause for low grades given to certain students. Their most frequent comment—an honest one, I believe—is that the student did not have adequate school preparation. Still further down: when I taught high school English I constantly heard—and made—the criticism that elementary schools neglected training in English. And kindergarten teachers, I know, express their dismay about the lack of "verbal readiness" in their young charges. Were we all to get together, graduate school to kindergarten, I suspect we would find the fault lies in the state of our culture. Moreover, there is impressive evidence that our difficulties are old ones, that students of ages more golden than ours have also distressed their teachers and the public with their lack of skill in reading, writing and speaking. The disease is not new, but perennial. But so was typhoid fever.

If you will grant, even for the course of this paper, that the situation is bad, we ought next to ask about the means to betterment. Is there a panacea? Will courses in "communication" do what needs to be done? Or programs of "life adjustment"? Exclusive emphasis on reading skills? on extensive reading? on propaganda analysis? on grammar—prescriptive *or* descriptive? on public speaking, dramatics, debate, forums? on the reading of newspapers and magazines? the analysis of moving-pictures or of television programs? I hear you sigh, and I know the reason. When I was teaching English in New York State, we were immersed in, steeped in, all but drowned in the reading controversy. "Life adjustment" was just a hand—or claw—on the horizon—if one can conceive of hands, or claws, being so located. Oral and written communication were still thought compatible and complementary. The argument about the new linguistics had not got under way. But change was in the air. The avant-garde was studying the Experience Curriculum, and Regents examinations in English had taken on the streamlining of multiple-choice problems. Now, I am told, all these things are upon you in full force. And in the midst of all of them you have, somehow, to go on teaching English.

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It does little good to bemoan the present, however, and if I am to make any contribution at all to this meeting I must try to take a look at the principal preoccupations of the English teachers and say whatever I can about them.

Will you accept the arbitrary—and customary—division of an English program into grammar, reading, speaking, and writing? I omit the rules for dating, table etiquette, learning to live with others, community betterment, Youth-in-government, soil conservation, and slum clearance. All are important, but none—as I see it—belongs in the English curriculum any more than in the mathematics curriculum or in that of physical education. Indeed, not so much, because English teachers have an endless job just in teaching English.

Grammar. I may as well make my position on the so-called new linguistics and new grammar clear at once so that you can sit in stony silence or listen with rapt approval as suits your taste. There is no likelihood, in the present climate, of making converts in either direction, I suspect. Professor Fries' latest book, *The Structure of English*, seems to me an interesting and even exciting piece of work. Yet I fail to see its meaningfulness at present for the teaching of English in secondary schools. Grammar is, as we use it, a shorthand. When we teach foreign languages, we use it to expedite learning. When we use it to teach English we are trying to develop a knowledge that will make it possible for us to talk intelligently about language. If we can tell a student that the subject of an infinitive takes the objective (or accusative) case, we have a shortcut to the correction of faulty expression. Without *some* such tool we are reduced to the necessity of drilling him in enough sentences to make that locution automatic — a laborious and unscientific procedure, to say the least. Now, modern linguists charge, with some reason, that the conventional terminology and structure of English grammar are based on a false analogy with the Latin tongue. They have found a whipping-boy called the eighteenth-century Latinist and they belabor him mightily for having deluded generations and bedevilled students beyond endurance. Insofar as those grammarians — who, by the way, were much more empirical in their procedures than the new linguists recognize — insofar as those grammarians imposed an overformal structure on English, certainly they did it one kind of disservice. On the other hand, *any* systematization does it the same disservice. Insofar as their analysis was inaccurate at the time or is irrelevant now, it must, of course, be corrected. What we want is the most accurate and most useful *shortcut* to learning language that can be devised. The one proposed by Professor Fries in his recent analysis seems to me to require much more memorizing than the one on which I was nourished and to substitute curiously uninformative designations for the relatively meaningful ones of conventional grammar. If I am right, then the tool loses in usefulness what it gains in accuracy, and I cannot see in the substitution of one for the other anywhere near enough advantage to warrant the distress it will cause. As to grammatical matters less esoteric,

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I have only this to say. Teaching grammar for the sake of grammar is nonsense. Teaching it so that students can learn to talk and write both effectively and felicitously seems to me to make the best kind of sense. Anyone who has tried to help a student strengthen a series of sentences knows well enough the value of such terms as "clause," "participle," "subordination" and "infinitive." Any substitute that will do as well as the pattern we now use will have to be good indeed. Certainly there are people whose lives will be made no better by a knowledge of grammar — or of the Pythagorean theorem, or of the bass clef, or of the provisions of the Taft-Hartley Act. It is not a matter of making lives better but of making learning easier. Grammar is a tool, and quality in tools is a matter of efficiency and precision. There ought, I think to be no *mystique* about the matter at all. If it works, use it; if it doesn't, sharpen it or find a better one. Conventional English grammar seems to me a sound tool; the fault if any lies largely in its growing disuse and in its occasional misuse.

Reading. For the sake of brevity, I shall skip over many of the concerns about reading which must necessarily preoccupy the teacher of English in a secondary school—remedial reading, vocabulary-building, and so on. I want to consider briefly two matters much debated: 1) extensive *vs* intensive reading; 2) classics *vs* popular selections. It goes without saying, I think, that we hope students will find pleasure in diversified reading and that they will read extensively, will develop the habit of finding in what Matthew Arnold called "the best that men have thought and said" a resource of constant and growing value to them. In the actual work of the classroom, however, it seems to me that intensive reading offers a superior means of developing the kind of intellectual alertness and sensitivity to language which mark the educated person. And I mean intensive reading in the most rigorous sense — examination not only for general meaning but for implication, for the unstated assumptions that condition statements, for the weight of words, their tone and color, and their persuasive qualities, for structure of statement, and precision of language, for relationships within passages, for allusions, for undertones of irony, for *doubles-entendres*. I believe that this is the kind of work that makes the best readers, and I think it can be done only on fairly short selections. There is more to be gained from a full hour of such activity on one paragraph than from five hours on a complete essay or story. This is hard work for teacher and student alike, and sometimes it is disagreeable work for the student, but if it makes him a keener reader, we must not mind too much the temporary distaste it may provoke. I have heard often enough — and so have you — that close reading kills enjoyment. I don't believe it. And even if it were true, even if one had to sacrifice "Dover Beach" to gain the end sought, the sacrifice is worth the result.

As to the kind of reading, this is what I have to say. I firmly believe that there is no place in the English program for tripe. If we are serious about our job, we must recognize that a diet of sloppy food neither builds good mental muscles nor develops the taste buds. The content of a good many high school — and college — anthologies today is little better than

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the content of the radio and television shows that are steadily dulling the mind and corrupting the sensibilities of a nation that is supposed to be literate. Contemporary writing? Of course. But exclusively contemporary writing, nó. Not unless we wish to make our schools the mirror instead of the beacon of our culture. I happen to think it is not necessary —not even advisable—for schools to attempt surveys of a national literature. But the reading of a few of the best works in English ought, I believe, to be the core of every year's program. Newspapers, no; *Colliers* and *The Saturday Evening Post* and *Time*, no; the *Reader's Digest*, a thousand and one times no. Why? All those publications have a function, but they *will be read* and can be read without specific instruction. The English program in schools ought not to trifle with its time. The reading selections ought *always* to be superior in quality; they ought always, in content, to be just far enough above the student to make him stretch.

I know some will say this is romantic nonsense. I swear it is not. It is precisely this kind of intellectual demand that is made in other educational systems, and there is no sound reason that we cannot make it, too. And there is every reason that we should. Let it not be said — as it may fairly be said of our students all too often — that the hungry sheep look up and are not fed.

Speaking. I shall say very little about speaking other than this: I hope it does not receive any more attention than is now accorded it. Formal courses in what is called public speaking undoubtedly have their place; debate is valuable for some, if intellectual responsibility is not forgotten in the zeal for victory; dramatics offers an even better prospect for encouraging clear enunciation and expression. But it seems to me that the best kind of training in speech can come within the regular English classroom, provided that the teacher is inflexible — even savage, if necessary — in demanding coherence in statement and good articulation, or silence. I think the classroom is the best place simply because speaking there is necessarily linked to thinking — or ought to be. By and large, those who have learned to think clearly will speak clearly, provided they are given practice and are kept to the mark. One of the most striking things I notice about my freshman classes at Harvard, particularly in the 1st term, is the contrast between the stunned and bewildered silence of most high school graduates and the confidence and ease — sometimes even glibness — of preparatory school graduates. The difference, I assure you, is not in intelligence; it is in lack of practice in discussing matters freely and thoughtfully and precisely without detailed written preparation beforehand.

Writing. This is the last of my four horsemen, and could I summon the apocalyptic tone I would do so here. Above grammar, above reading and above speaking, I place writing. There is nothing that so readily shows a man the shallowness of his thought, nothing that so powerfully stimulates him to *better* thought as writing. I suspect you will agree with me, and for that reason I turn to the objection I can detect without

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recourse to anything so esoteric as extrasensory perception. Where are English teachers to get the time to read the amount of writing they ought to require? There are, it seems to me, two ways of attacking the problem, and probably both should be pushed for all they are worth. One is to belabor, night and day, in as many ways as possible, the administrators of the schools. English teaching has become the dumping ground for many duties that could very well be delegated to others. *All* the teachers of a school ought to be able to deal with language; and the newspaper, the assembly program, and dramatics ought no longer to be the "little extra duties" that make the teaching of English itself almost impossible or at best secondary. Moreover, English teachers ought to have fewer and smaller classes than others in the school system. This is a heretical statement to make in an egalitarian society, but it is a sound statement. Seventy-five pupils are all a good teacher can do a good job with in this field. There ought to be a new theme — or its equivalent — at least once a week, and most of the pieces ought to undergo revision within the week. Nearly every paper will demand a brief conference between teacher and student. That makes a fifty-hour week for any man — and I suspect fifty hours won't even do the job.

My second proposal is designed to take care of the millenia that must lapse before you succeed in convincing administrators of the truth. It still suggests a theme a week but it admits — sadly — the presence of 125 to 150 students instead of 75, and of all the peripheral duties as well. It sacrifices re-writing, because something must go. And it also dispenses with detailed comment. It rests, in the end, on the hope and premise, neither of them really forlorn, that practice in writing will of itself produce improvement. Two precautions accompany this proposal. First, though not annotated, every paper should be graded in some fashion — a goad, a reward, and a direction signal at once. It is possible, also, to work out a system that will provide for detailed reading of one paper out of five, or eight, or ten in every set, the students being kept ignorant of which papers will be chosen in any particular set. Secondly, the topics ought to be of a kind to produce thinking and, at the same time and quite as importantly, to make your job of reading enjoyable. If the themes become quests for the student, they will become discoveries both for him and for you. There probably is value in the hoary topics about last summer's vacation and plans for the future; but there is more in topics that push the student to look inside himself and then, with new eyes, at the world around him. If he is asking why? and how? and what if? he will be forced to think, and you will be pleased to read. The boy who writes about the way his political — or religious or social — ideas have changed will soon be uncomfortable with cant and cliche' – particularly if you let him know you are uncomfortable, too. The boy who asks what his money buys, how he really feels about dissecting a frog, why he concealed his pleasure at being elected to an office — that boy is writing something he wants and needs to get said in clear language, and something no English teacher worthy the name would not rejoice to read. Poems? Plays? Short stories? Humorous sketches? Yes, they too

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produce learning. But they need the ballast of inquiry and pondering that only the essay will provide for people so young and inexperienced as those in secondary schools.

Let me return to my opening remarks. We all seek development of knowledge and reason and feeling in our students. Nothing in the history of education shows that those things come from indifference, or laxness, or haste and cursoriness. As English teachers we cannot take lightly our guardianship of language and of literature. We should not be ashamed to be picayune, puristic, and fanatical about our subject. If we do not love it with passion, none of our students will.

May I close with a true story. A friend of mine, a counselor in the psychological counseling service at Harvard, recently had a rather torpid fellow in his office. I should note that the procedure used in the counseling service is what is called non-directive; the counselor listens, grunts, smokes, repeats the counselee's own phrases, and when occasion demands, outwaits the counselee in almost interminable silences. The day my friend had Smith in the office — a fourth or fifth interview for the boy — he asked about a course the boy was taking, a course whose glorious subtitle is "Ideas of Good and Evil in Western Literature." Smith said it was going well, he guessed he liked it. "What do you mean by 'evil'?" my friend asked.

The boy grunted, as if the question hadn't occurred to him before. Then rose to the occasion with an airy reply, "Oh, you know, drinking, gambling, swearing . . ."

My friend cut him short, in non-directive fashion. "Oh, come off it," he said. "Stop that kind of talk."

The boy looked surprised, grew silent and stayed silent — for twelve minutes. He twisted, burbled, grunted, grew listless and tormented in turn. Finally a gleam came into his eyes and he said, "I know. It's squealing on your friends." And, utterly exhausted, sank back into his chair.

That I submit as a parable. On one side of the desk, pain and passion; on the other, infinite patience, absolute inflexibility, and a belief in the job. And suddenly within the room the magic of education.

Our part in this magic is only one part, and I think we should not try to do *all* the prestidigitation ourselves. Let us, as English teachers, teach English. Let us teach it for all we are worth. And let's not permit anyone — or anything — to get in our way or divert us from the difficult, onerous, and immensely satisfying job of helping the young to read deeply, think honestly, and write like the angels they are.

Reading Skills For The Forgotten In-Betweens

Margaret J. Early

The English teacher's major task is one of selection. In a field that may very well encompass the universe, the English teacher must select carefully in order to avoid spreading instruction too thin. The old cliche', "We must teach less in order to teach more" is particularly pertinent in our field.

In teaching reading skills we are constantly plagued by the problem of scope and sequence. Who teaches what when? The question cannot be answered in general terms. When it is, the goals for grade seven look just like the goals for grade eleven. And such a guide is of very little help in planning tomorrow's lesson.

To arrive at specific answers to the question, "What reading skills should I emphasize in my ninth grade class of general students?", the English teacher must first answer the following questions:

1. Who are my pupils? In what kind of community do they live?
2. In their life now in that community what reading skills do they need?
3. In the occupations they will enter what reading skills will be useful to them?
4. In school, what reading skills are required of them?
5. In a specific learning unit in my class, what reading skills will they need?

When the answers to these questions provide a list of skills and abilities that might be included in any year's program, this list must be carefully analyzed to determine:

How difficult is the task of acquiring each skill? Is the inherent difficulty of learning this skill so great that instruction might better be postponed until pupils have attained a greater maturity?

When the first list of skills and abilities has been analyzed and refined in the process of answering these questions, the teacher is ready to look for the answer to the most important question of all:

In relation to each skill, what are the strengths and weaknesses of my pupils?

It is on the basis of this analysis of pupils' needs that the teacher sets up his program of skills instruction in reading. To talk about some of the techniques that can be used in teaching reading skills, I shall have to make some assumptions about the needs of non-college-preparatory

students — assumptions that in a teaching situation would be validated by the analysis described.

In a recent study of teaching practices in non-college-preparatory English classes, we asked students to tell us what skills and abilities they considered most useful. At the top of the list of reading skills was: *increasing my vocabulary*. In this same study, we asked students to rate selected teaching practices. They recognized only one practice as being widespread: "looking up" lists of words assigned by the teacher. They rated this practice as among the least popular. This attitude—in favor of the goal but opposed to the most common means of reaching it—ought to give us pause for consideration as we take a long steady look at our skills program. These students are convinced of the usefulness of a rich vocabulary, but they find the most common method of teaching vocabulary dull. Certainly we would agree with our students that a powerful vocabulary is a fundamental goal in education, for words are the stuff that ideas are made on. It seems too bad not to capitalize on our pupils' interest in this instance. What can we do to make vocabulary building less dull?

We can teach students that the dictionary is the court of last resort. As adults, we would add little to our vocabularies if we had to assimilate the words by the painful method of looking them up in the dictionary. So we teach students the value of context clues . . . the variety of clues to word meanings that authors provide. Constance McCullough provides a clear and practical approach to context clues in her well-known article on word analysis in the January, 1952, *English Journal*.

For pupils who have had no Latin I see very little value in an exhaustive study of prefixes, suffixes and roots. They need to know the meanings of common prefixes and suffixes, and a wall chart helps here. The pupils should construct this chart themselves. Such a chart is an aid in building word families. Frequent, brief exercises in finding words that belong to the same family stimulate interest in vocabulary.

Pupils enjoy word histories. In connection with studying the history of language they can learn about the origins of words and how words change in meaning.

Especially for non-college-preparatory students, teaching the multiple meanings of common words is important. One of the shortcomings of the average person is the vague understanding he brings to common words. The college-bound student may be introduced to semantics in college, but it is our responsibility to see that terminal students learn now about the power of language. We can relate to this elementary approach to semantics a study of the general and technical meanings of words. For example, if the student learns the technical meaning of *assets* and *liabilities* in bookkeeping, he can learn the general use of these terms in English class.

The end of all vocabulary teaching is to increase the pupils' awareness of words. We can develop interest in words by such devices as

word cards, picture dictionaries, committees for adding words to the class vocabulary. We can use committees to scan reading selections for words that may need enriching. We can provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their experiences with words.

In the broader area of comprehension what skills should we teach? From the many skills that fall under that broad and somewhat useless heading—comprehension—we need to select those that the average student uses. Should we, for example, teach formal outlining to pupils who are not bound for college? When will they use it? On the other hand, do they need to know how to read the labels on cans, how to follow instructions for assembling a bookcase or using a steam iron? While I would omit formal outlining for general students, they do need instruction in organizational reading: following the author's pattern, selecting main ideas, evaluating major and minor ideas. These skills, however, are probably best taught in relation to content fields like social studies and science. Teachers of these content areas should assume the major responsibility for teaching these skills.

If, however, we ask our pupils to give reports in English class we must teach them *how:* how to take notes, how to skim for pertinent information, how to evaluate material in terms of its pertinence to the subject and in terms of reliability of the source.

In teaching organizational skills, we operate on the principle of gradually removing props. For example, for the pupil weakest in comprehension we provide guide questions before reading a selection. Gradually, we decrease the number of detail questions and increase the number of inferential questions. We move from the elaborate aids to recall provided by detailed study guides to complete unaided recall.

While the organizational skills may be chiefly the province of the content fields, there are many, many skills in creative or interpretive reading that no one but the English teacher can handle effectively. Do we expect pupils to read plays? Then we must teach them how to read stage directions and how to visualize action on a stage. Helping students to read in technicolor may be one of the basic steps in developing pleasure in reading fiction.

Do we wish twelfth-graders to write a character sketch of Arrowsmith? Before we can suggest such an assignment we must teach students how to read for clues to character. Easier than finding clues to character is finding clues to setting. Yet how many times have pupils announced "I dunno" when you have asked, "Where did the story take place?" We must show pupils in direct teaching lessons *how* to find clues to time and place. For example, you may construct a series of lessons giving just the opening lines or first paragraphs of short stories. Pupils should be asked to guess where and when the story takes place and to indicate the words that drop hints — words like "hansom cab" or "radio" or "franc" or "42nd Street." These paragraphs might culminate with the reading of a whole selection like Stephen Vincent Benet's *By the*

Waters of Babylon, a story that depends upon the reader's ability to pick up increasingly pointed clues to the time and place.

Teachers frequently ask: "How do we teach comprehension?" I believe we improve comprehension by the types of questions we ask. If we ask only questions on specific details, we stultify pupils' growth in reading for inference. We must vary the type of questions we ask to cover the range of levels of comprehension. In direct teaching lessons, we show pupils how to find the answers to these questions. Then growth in comprehension can come from frequent practice in answering questions that determine the depth of understanding demanded by the purpose for reading.

So far I have been talking about depth reading—reading in close-up. I have omitted talking about speed of comprehension, not because I think it is unimportant, but because I can sum up practices in developing rapid reading very quickly. By a variety of materials and plentiful practice, we teach flexibility of reading rate: how to adjust rate according to our purpose and the difficulty of the material.

Skills instruction to be effective must be repetitive. To avoid monotony, therefore, we must strive for imaginative approaches in skills instruction. And in every case, the pupil must see his need for the skill and his progress toward acquiring it.

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The Teaching Composition In Junior High School

Robert W. Rounds

Our intent here, I take it, is to consider some of the problems involved in teaching boys and girls in the junior high school how to communicate their thoughts successfully in writing. We shall be thinking of composition or writing as one aspect of a broader field, language or communication arts. And as we talk of teaching writing, let us remember that in the classroom writing is not often a separated element; more often it is fused with speaking, reading and listening—the other formal segments of communication. Perhaps as we discuss writing we shall see instances of the "fused" character of communication and so avoid the danger of being unrealistic in our discussion.

The first problem, a rather general one, is shared by all sincere teachers of junior high school boys and girls, namely, gaining an understanding of the boys and girls in our classrooms. Understanding of pupils by teachers is important, of course, from kindergarten to college; but in the junior high school it's *vital*. You just can't do without it—and teach, that is. Consider. Somewhere during the junior high school years most boys and girls will enter adolescence. Most, but not all, girls will mature before boys. Amost any junior high classroom will contain examples of physical extremes. Differing physical development means differences in needs and interests. So this problem, understanding children and recognizing their individual differences, is a basic one.

We cannot go into a thorough study of this first problem, but we may be able to suggest some practical ways in which the successful teacher gains understanding of his pupils. Let's simply list the qualities we think of as helping a teacher gain these understandings. Such a teacher is, first of all, interested in boys and girls. He really listens to them when they talk and *reads what they say when they write*. He doesn't listen or look only for errors. However, though he responds first of all to a pupil's communication, he is deeply concerned with helping him improve his techniques of communication. And he sees each pupil as a unique individual with his own special set of communication problems. This teacher is a friendly person, but he plays no favorites. He respects pupils' confidences. He's no teachers'-room gossip. In other words, the words of his pupils, such a teacher is a regular guy—or gal.

Because much of the discussion we are coming to will explore ways of meeting individual needs, we aren't really leaving this first problem. If the teacher accepts the point of view implied in what we have already said (understand children; find their needs; help them satisfy their

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needs), then everything that follows should help to put that point of view to work in the classroom.

The second problem that faces the junior high school teacher of composition is this: creating the kind of classroom atmosphere that will help boys and girls learn how to write. First, what will such a classroom be like? Here are five characteristics that seem important to me:

1. The attitude of the teacher is democratic, not dictatorial; helpful, not critical; friendly, not alien. (See discussion of problem one.)
2. The teacher values, savors, enjoys language. He puts the imprint of his enjoyment on his classroom by sharing his experiences in language with his classes. He reads wisely and shares generously. He also shares his own writing occasionally, for he must write himself if he is to teach others.
3. The classroom is attractive and colorful, bright with inviting posters and pictures that don't look as if they have been up since September. (I know this is important. It's a dream I hope some day to realize.)
4. The classroom is not an isolated ivory tower. You cannot visit it and not notice the many lines connecting it with the community and the world. You will also observe connections with other subject-matter classrooms. This room deals with language in action, not language bottled in formaldehyde.
5. Life in this classroom is social as well as intellectual. It is not regimented. People bump elbows. Sometimes they work together in groups. They plan; they discuss; they work out problems.

Now, how does a teacher go about creating the atmosphere I have described? He gets to know his pupils (problem one, again). Teacher and pupils together plan units of work that will meet pupils' needs (and course of study requirements). And the teacher tries to see that tasks he sets for the pupils or that they set for themselves are meaningful tasks, not drudgery. What the pupil does must have meaning for him. To the extent that it does, the atmosphere I have described will be achieved.

The previous paragraph is obviously an incomplete answer to problem two. In broad terms, however, it indicates the direction in which answers lie; and, in more specific terms, the answers to problem three, which we are about to look at, may also help.

The third problem facing the teacher of composition in the junior high school is finding meaningful writing situations. (I am just now struck by the artificiality of my division of this subject into first problem, second problem, and so on. When you actually face a junior high school classroom, problems aren't so neatly numbered. And they come all at once, like a ton of bricks. It will lend some realism to your thinking on this subject if, when I say "the third problem," you will say "another problem that we will call number three.") I am numbering the suggestions I have for finding meaningful writing situations. The order of the suggestions has no significance.

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1. Establish the idea that writing is the base of communication. When you want to be sure, you get it down on paper. This applies, for example, to a secretary's minutes. If there are groups working within a class, each group should have a secretary, so there will be constant need for this kind of writing. Use writing also to straighten out a playground squabble or to determine exactly what has happened in a classroom incident. (Do you see semantics coming in here?) Use this kind of writing to examine and perhaps straighten out the thinking that a group has expressed on an issue it has been discussing. (Teacher: "Now, we've been discussing this matter pretty heatedly for twenty minutes. Suppose we take ten minutes to try to find out where we are—on paper. Let's write a paragraph, each of us, that sums up what the class thinks on this subject. Then we'll hear some of them before the period ends.") A final example of this getting-it-down writing is usable especially in groups, where frequent evaluations are needed. Written evaluations will help clarify purposes and goals.

2. Use letters that are written to be read by actual people and that will go to those people. Boys and girls, particularly in the seventh and eighth grade, enjoy writing to "pen pals" in other cities or countries. You might begin such a project with a class letter, written on the blackboard as it is dictated by the boys and girls. It would explain the project to an English supervisor in some distant city. Create and use incidental uses for letters; for example, inviting and afterwards thanking a speaker, arranging for a visit to a court or to a museum and then thanking the authorities, responding to a TV program designed for boys and girls. Have the children write letters you would ordinarily write yourself in connection with speakers, supplies and arrangements. Check to see if your library has catalogs listing free materials for school use. With discretion, have pupils write for supplies they need. (Some teachers have misused the idea of having pupils write letters. Do not suggest to a child that he write to an author or to some other prominent person. Do not send a stack of thirty-five "letters" to a radio or TV program. Keep letter-writing on a sensible level.)

3. Introduce the children to the joy of sharing their thoughtful, exciting, humorous or otherwise meaningful experiences through writing. The kind of atmosphere we talked about in problem two seems almost bound to stimulate, to invite this kind of writing in which children explore their worlds. The teacher can help to precipitate writing of this sort by sharing with his pupils some of his own reading and some of the observations he makes on life around him. If he will keep his own eyes and other sense organs open and share his perceptions, his pupils will soon match his observations with their own. With a minimum of leadership most children will become aware of values they had previously ignored or failed to see or, perhaps, just not talked about. The sorts of things children will observe and share in class are unpredictable in that no one knows what they will notice, predictable in that they will be honest and accurate and wise. They will notice such things as

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these: the feelings they have in high places, frost rimming the leaves of a sumac bush, the construction of a tent caterpillar egg mass, what some adults do with their hands, the smell of a carpenter's shop, the feeling they have when they think about death. The sharing so far has been oral. The step to writing will be simple if the children themselves sense that they need to record their thoughts to keep them. The teacher may have to help. One way is to watch for interesting relationships between what a pupil is sharing with the group now and what another child said days ago. If the exact words of the original have been forgotten, perhaps someone will say, "We should write these down." Of course, writing need not begin this way. It may come as the result of a common experience—an overnight camping trip; an expedition to a museum, a bakery or a courtroom (perhaps for social studies or science); a talk by a dynamic personality; any chance occurrence that sets sensitive boys and girls thinking. There are many other ways, of course, none guaranteed. What is sure, though, is that the interested teacher will find a way that works and that both he and his pupils will benefit from.

4. Use the classroom or the school newspaper to share knowledge and observations. For many children, writing takes on meaning when they realize that their words will be printed or typed for others to read.

5. Use literature as a spark to set off writing in response to ideas, characters and vicarious experiences. Suppose you know that a junior high boy or girl has just read a book and enjoyed it. Can you, with the child, work out a meaningful writing assignment based on the reading experience? You want the writing to be something the pupil wants to say, and you also want to see that there is someone to whom it will be said —a reader. (There should be real readers for everything children write in school.) Try asking the pupil why he liked the book. Maybe he can write a paragraph that answers that question. Then perhaps he can get the book's jacket from the librarian and post the paragraph and the jacket on the bulletin board for his classmates to read. Another person might prefer to write a sketch of a character in the book, perhaps drawing a picture of the character to accompany the writing. Another might simply want to write his reaction (as an expert in books, say, about atomic submarines), and read it to the class. What I am trying to suggest is that if we use a little ingenuity and imagination, we can make this kind of writing meaningful.

So far we have talked about three problems the teacher of composition faces—gaining an understanding of pupils, creating an atmosphere that will help, and finding meaningful writing situations. A fourth problem, the last one I shall raise, is this: finding time to read and evaluate pupils' writing. The average teacher of junior high school English teaches five classes five times a week and has a home room in addition. With class size running around thirty, how can the teacher keep from being swamped by the job of reading 150 papers a week? Unless we can find some ways to meet this problem, the rest of what we've said won't make much sense. I have the following suggestions:

1. With your principal, look for ways of reducing the pupil load. If home rooms move as classes, and if the teacher of composition has a home room, he should have his home room class as a composition class. If your school is experimentally inclined, look for possible combinations—English and guidance, for example, or English and social studies.

2. Use an open orange-box file in the classroom and keep pupil papers in it in manila folders. Use occasional bits of time for classroom conferences with pupils, checking the work in their folders with them.

3. Examine your position in relation to the pupil and his piece of writing. Is he writing for you? For a grade? To communicate his thoughts to you? Or is he writing to communicate his thoughts to a group that includes you? What I am getting at is this: We want pupils to write in meaningful circumstances, to communicate to someone when they write. We want such communications to be complete; that is, we want someone to hear or to read the communication. If that is true, isn't our purpose and the pupils's achieved when the paper is read or heard by the audience to whom it is addressed? Doesn't the pupil often know right then whether the paper was successful or not? If we take the paper home then and examine it for success or failure, aren't we actually conducting a post mortem when the cause of death is already known? I'm exaggerating, of course. Yet I think we have a tendency to see our jobs bound by the time we have to read and grade papers. We shouldn't. Our jobs are much broader and more significant, and we mustn't let ourselves be swamped by unnecessary details.

4. Help pupils to set up and maintain their own individual standards for spelling and mechanics. Teacher-imposed standards and goals are often less effective for the pupil than self-imposed ones. Use pupil-helpers to check papers for mechanics. Release yourself in these ways for conferences.

Individual Differences: The Basic Problem in Planning a Junior High School Reading Program

Elizabeth M. Drews

Perhaps you will not all agree with me that our basic problem in planning a junior high school reading program is in taking action on what has almost become a cliche'—adjusting to individual differences. You will agree, however, that at this period of schooling the range of abilities is greater than it ever has been before, that there is more demand for reading as a skill, and that most teachers in junior high schools are relatively innocent of the art of teaching reading. Too often when tests are given, results are ignored and children who are very different are taught as if they were all alike. This is not to say that no tests should be given. On the contrary, testing and the determination of instructional needs is a necessary part of any good reading program. There is, however, a need for intelligent choice, administration and use of tests.

Adjustment Needs as Indicated by Range of Ability

Although the range of reading skills is an easy matter to determine, many times proper precautions are not taken in measurement. Often we consider variations to be smaller than they are because of testing procedures. For example, a single test for all children, usually an elementary form for grades seven, eight and nine, results in arbitrary test floors and ceilings. Slow students receive unrealistically high scores while the better readers' scores are lowered by inadequate testing at upper limits. In attempting to view the situation more realistically, we have, in our junior high schools in Lansing, used primary and intermediate forms and informal inventories with our poorest readers, and advanced level or even college tests with our most able. The range of obtained scores has been, in each of three junior high schools surveyed, from pre-primer to sixteenth grade level. In New York the situation appears to be no different. Here again there are 16- and 17-year-olds with normal intelligence who can read not at all or only poorly in primary reading materials, and again we find high school students with reading skills at the college graduate level. As you would expect, reading, like other developmental skills, follows a normal bell-shaped distribution so that in an unselected population there are about equal numbers above and below average. Often only one-third of an eighth-grade group test at

grade level, with one-third testing above, ranging in grade level from ninth to sixteenth, and one-third falling below, from seventh down to first grade level.

Adjustment Needs as Indicated by Study of Materials

If we recognize this great range of abilities as a reality, we must also recognize the need for special teaching approaches and materials. Two years ago one of the superintendents in Lansing asked me a very logical question: Could a group of seventh graders reading at sixth grade level use texts designed for grade seven? In order to supply an answer for this question we set up a small experimental study. Fifty students with normal intelligence who read at or near the sixth grade level were selected. (An individual intelligence test, the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children, as well as group and individual reading tests, were used in the evaluation.)

Our next step was to select median or average paragraphs from the social science and science tests. Three readability formulas (the Dale-Chall, the Flesch, and the Lorge) were applied to the texts, and in this way we chose a selection of somewhat over 100 words that was fairly representative of each book. Eight to ten comprehension questions were then developed for each paragraph. The final step was to ask each of the 50 to read the two paragraphs orally in an individual situation. A student was judged to be able to read the material with understanding or proficiency if he could pronounce 95 per cent or more of the words or if he were able to answer correctly 75 per cent of the composition questions. Only one of the 50 could read the science paragraph adequately and only two could read the social science selections. It should be mentioned here, however, that even though the books were labeled seventh grade texts, their readability level, as indicated by the formulas used, was more nearly eighth grade.

In considering the extremes of the distribution—i.e., the lower and upper thirds—it seems fairly clear, if our experimental study means anything, that the lower group cannot read typical texts with any degree of skill and understanding. A search for other materials for these students, therefore, seems indicated. There is moreover the question as to whether adjustments are also needed for the upper third. Since we have shown that texts, at least junior high texts, are sometimes written above grade level, it seems feasible that they would be suitable for some of the better students. The students who read at college level, however, would profit by something more advanced.

Adjusted Programs as a Possible Solution

In Lansing, as in many other school systems, adjusted materials and programs have been tried. Two of these programs have met with considerable success and acceptance, namely, adjusted instruction for the lowest 20 to 30 per cent and programs for the most gifted. With the lower third we have found it most successful to place the students in groups of

15 to 20 and to allow them to select several easy texts or read from a variety of library materials. Teachers volunteer for such adjusted instruction and usually do not teach more than one or two classes of this type. An effort is also made to keep the program flexible. Children are placed in adjusted classes only if they need easy level materials in a particular area. Thus, a student may be in a regular mathematics class and yet be in adjusted English. An effort is also made to move a student into a regular grade placement as soon as he no longer needs special materials.

Adjustments for the very able readers are still very much in the experimental stage but the small-scale attempts have been well accepted by children, school people and the general public. Critical reading classes, stressing both depth and breadth in a given subject area, are being tried in grades seven, eight and nine. Research seminars, also stressing critical thinking and reading, have been another approach. Studies have been carefully controlled, using matched groups (sex, age, and intelligence level) as well as pre-tests and post-tests to determine possible gains. Results are promising, but there is a need for much more study as well as for experimental work with larger groups.

Need for Action Not Reaction

If we are going to try to improve reading instruction, we do not need to search for some new answer or for some magic panacea. We actually have many of the answers to the questions we have been posing year after year. What is now needed is the courage and the persistence to do what we have talked about so hopefully or perhaps even so despairingly: to recognize the range of differences and make the necessary adjustments. We have tests to determine reading level, we have students in all of our schools who need the adjusted instruction, and we now have many excellent materials which appeal to readers of all descriptions. There are many ways to meet the problem—some prefer to use a core activity or unit or an individual project in heterogeneous groupings, some prefer to reduce the range of reading levels by more homogeneous grouping, and some use special reading consultants or teachers. The point I want to make is that we should do something. As yet we do not know the "best" way, but there are many approaches which make far greater allowances for individual differences than a one-text, uniform assignment method. Instead of merely talking about the necessity of taking differences into account we must act upon our knowledge.

We have all been asked to give our main wish concerning the planning of reading programs. Mine is simply a desire that we make use of the knowledge we already have.

The College Problem of English Vocabulary

Leo L. Rockwell

Criticism of the teaching of English in the United States ranks next after criticism of politicians as a favorite indoor sport. Let me say at once that as a college teacher of English I have no criticism of English teaching in the schools. Rather I have the greatest admiration for what English teachers achieve under great handicaps.

I agree with the man who is probably the best informed foreign critic of our country, Denis Brogan of Cambridge. He has said: "The political function of the schools is to teach Americanism." He adds: "the task of an American school is in many regions to teach the American language, to enable it to compete with Spanish, with French, with Yiddish, with German, with Swedish." Finally he concludes: the countless teachers who have labored, pedantically, formally, with complete and erroneous conviction that there are correct standards, have been heroes as important in the mass as was William McGuffey."

Those who compare us, to our disadvantage, with the school achievement in England and Scotland overlook the great differences in our situation. England and lowland Scotland have spoken English for centuries. Here we have millions of children who have to learn English as a foreign tongue. Many of them are sprung from immigrant parents who have come to America chiefly as Dollarland, so that their aims have been materialistic and they have been uninterested in "The American Way." Indeed, many leaders of immigrants from the beginning have been hostile to our culture, including the language. In early times Germans were chiefly subject to this separate pressure. Today it is perhaps chiefly French Canadians and Puerto Ricans who suffer under it.

I shall not go into the many other forces hostile to the teaching of the language. They are familiar to you. And in the colleges we also suffer from different but equally strong hostile forces. These too you know. So let us turn to the English vocabulary itself. How much more difficult that is to learn than it was fifty years ago when I was a college student! And how enormously more difficult it is than it was when in 1828 Noah Webster first published his *American Dictionary of the English Language!* That work, the most complete of its time in the coverage of English words, listed approximately 70,000 "words." Today our selective collegiate dictionaries list roughly twice as many, and the Merriam *Webster's New International Dictionary*, second edition of 1934, included 600,000 "vocabulary items," as the editors called them, and even then was incomplete.

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It is then not remarkable that we English teachers ourselves never master the "word-hoard," as you may call it if you are an antiquarian, the "vocabulary" as we usually term it, or the "lexicon" if you prefer a hifalutin expression. And if we cannot master it, what can we expect of our students? To be sure, we have exhaustive frequency counts on which to base our judgment as to the most useful words, and numerous other devices to make our teaching more intelligent.

But before we go further, we must make an important distinction between two phases of vocabulary learning. We must distinguish between an individual's *productive vocabulary*, which he uses in speaking and writing, and his *recognition vocabulary*, which he employs in listening and reading. In the colleges we do pretty well with the productive vocabulary. In courses specifically devoted to writing and speaking, we can, *under favorable conditions*, equip a student with the diction he needs to speak and write as an educated man should. By favorable conditions I mean primarily an experienced teacher and a small class. At Colgate we make a fairly successful effort to limit our courses in speech and writing to a maximum of twenty students. A class like that enables the teacher to give individual attention. Beyond that size, every added student decreases the effectiveness of instruction.

But the recognition vocabulary is another matter. English words are increasing by thousands every year. Some of the new ones we learn because of their frequency of occurrence, but many which educated men and women should know are rare in appearance. Besides that, the older words are less and less familiar to every generation. This is particularly true of the words used in standard literature.

This term I have a course in the recent American novel. The preliminary registration is usually too large. At the beginning of this term, after warning the group that only those who could read rapidly and well should attempt the course, I gave them objective evidence of their relative ability by administering a vocabulary test.

For this diagnosis I employed the Inglis "Test of the Intelligent Reader's Vocabulary," which probably many of you know. It is a one-hundred-fifty-word multiple choice test; most students can finish it in thirty minutes. It is primarily a test of the older vocabulary, since it was prepared by Alexander of the Harvard Graduate School of Education in the 1920s. Its use in this course is justified by the fact that even in recent novels a good deal of the traditional word-stock appears.

Now I should add that at Colgate our students are pretty carefully selected, and that those who survive to be upperclassmen have had a fair "general education." In addition, I should say that my novel course is an *omnium gatherum* course, students coming from all fields, with a sprinkling of English majors.

On the test approximately half of these juniors and seniors ranked lower than the median score for college freshmen when the test was stan-

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dardized. Now we must not generalize too broadly from this showing. Had I given the group the Michigan Profile Test covering eight fields of human activity it is probable that these lads would have outranked their fathers when the fathers were in college. It is possible that they would have outranked their mothers as college girls, though this is less likely. For one need not agree altogether with Ashley Montagu in his assertion of "the natural superiority of women," but experienced teachers are likely to agree that girls *are* superior in the mastery of the language arts. Perhaps Weston LaBarre is right in saying that our foolish clinging to the outworn Hebrew patriarchal tradition and to Greek Platonism, even when biology, linguistics, and other sciences have shown the fallacy, are responsible for male domination of our culture.

It is certainly not irrelevant to our problem that there are more women than men of college age in the United States but that our discriminatory policies permit only half the women to enter college. It has often been remarked that the term "mother-tongue" is peculiarly appropriate for our native speech because the mother is the most important early teacher of a child. And if it is true, as linguists assert, that by the age of five a child has usually mastered the structure of his native language, then the importance of this early training is obvious. If the mother is unable, through ignorance, too large a family, or the disintegrating influences of modern life, to lay a good foundation, a child may suffer from that deficiency into college and beyond. Certainly half my novel students needed more experience with the mother-tongue.

To return now to our problem, what can we college teachers of English do about this urgent need for expansion in range and accuracy of a student's recognition vocabulary? I think the first need is diagnosis, at the beginning of the freshman year, of the individual's linguistic achievement. In this respect colleges have made some progress. I suppose all colleges now give placement tests of an individual's achievement in the various fields. But it seems to me that vocabulary has not so large a place in the battery as it deserves. Would it not be well for colleges which have a course in freshman English to supplement the general placement tests with others given at the outset? Frequently the simple diagnosis of his deficiencies is a powerful stimulus to a student to look about for means of remedying them. Every year students who have suddenly become aware of their need come to me for advice on independent study.

At Colgate we have no course in freshman English[1] except for students who are obviously in need of remedial work, for whom we provide a writing laboratory and a reading clinic. But under this Functional English Program we have persuaded our colleagues in other departments that the general problem of English is their problem as much as it is ours, and within the limits of their competence and energy they are doing a good deal in this matter. Some courses have prepared special glossaries of the technical terminology of the field.

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In colleges in which freshman English *is* a general requirement, a good deal can be done. Even though the primary emphasis may be on writing, a good deal of reading may be done, both intensive, with sharp questioning on *the meanings of words in context*, and extensive, in which the aim should be enjoyment, as a stimulus to independent reading.

Today we have a new weapon in our attempt to encourage independent reading. When, back before World War I, I was a student in German universities, I envied European students the cheap editions of literary works, such as the *Reclam Bibliothek* and the *Classiques pour Tous*. Today we have not only a wealth of excellent reading in paperbacks, but a composite catalogue of paperbacks in print. Low cost is not the only advantage of the paperbacks. They are compact; not so much space is devoted to cardboard as in the hardbacks. They take up little space in the pocket or the living-room. In the constricted living quarters of today, that is an important advantage. In an age in which, following the dictates of so-called "gracious living," in many homes the bar has replaced the bookcase, paperbacks are a boon not to be sneered at. A society which calls alcoholism an illness, and yet devotes strenuous efforts to encourage the spread of this illness beyond the four and a half million alcoholics now costing us all so much in money and human suffering, may well tolerate a reading habit as an alternative to the anti-intellectualism of the bar-room. It is perhaps part of our duty to persuade intelligent members of the coming generation that a *book* is a better companion than a *bock*.

Another powerful weapon, perhaps more difficult to learn to handle, is a high-powered dictionary. Whether your personal preference be for the *Webster Collegiate*, the *American College Dictionary*, or the *Webster New World*, your English department should make sure that every student has a copy of one of these and with prayer and perspiration you should ponder how to make students understand and enjoy the "dictionary habit." Publishers are glad to help in this task. Naturally some students are linguistically sandblind, but many can be made aware of the fascination of the history of words.

A piece of good news is the recent issue of a new single-volume edition of the Mathews *Dictionary of Americanisms*. It can now be had for $12.50 instead of the $50 (less educational discount) I had to pay for it when it was first published. It should be easily available to students. Our good fortune today in an abundance of good dictionaries is not always realized.

It is unfortunate that Mr. Mathews has not issued a revision of his *Survey of English Dictionaries* published in 1933. But it still has usefulness; my article "Look It Up in Which Dictionary?"[1] in the *English Record* will supplement it.

If you do not know Mr. Guralnik's essay on the making of a dictionary and Harry Warfel's song of praise for the *Webster's New World*

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Dictionary, they will doubtless be sent you upon request by the World Book Company.

Of course it is true that, as Leta Hollingworth pointed out long ago, control of vocabulary is a function of general intelligence, so that one must not expect too much from the best teaching devices. Johnson O'Connor's discovery that success in life correlates with range and accuracy of individual vocabulary may however inspire some of the less promising to make the old college try, if his findings are made known to students.

The value of direct vocabulary study with workbooks is still a controversial matter; with our linguistically underprivileged generation it seems to me it cannot be harmful, although the enthusiastic claims of the compilers of workbooks are perhaps exaggerated. Some colleges have courses devoted to vocabulary.

I think general reading is the best single method of expanding vocabulary, and the habit once formed is apt to maintain the alertness necessary to keep up with linguistic change in this field. In a college class one can often find opportunity to recommend specific books and articles; the appeal is strengthened if the book or periodical is visible. Immediate results will almost certainly be slight, but even a 5% return is worthwhile; and I have evidence to show that the long-range effect is at times surprisingly good.

Another duty of the teacher of English at all levels is to encourage the study of foreign languages. As Ben Franklin said, we must hang together unless we wish to hang separately. The country generally is recovering somewhat from a bad attack of linguistic isolationism, partly induced by certain professors of education. You should know the values of foreign language study for gifted students. Your department should have several copies of the booklet *The National Interest and Foreign Languages*, initiated by the U.S. National Commission for UNESCO; you, yourself, should have read the first seventy-two pages. Today I am not thinking of those values. I am concerned only with the value in developing the vocabulary of English.

For this purpose, of the two classical languages I think for the next half-century Greek will prove to be more valuable than Latin as a college study. More and more our technical vocabularies are composed of Greco-English formative elements. I have one friend, a professor of zoology, who says he does not care what studies a student who comes into his classes has had, except for Greek, which he would like all to have had.

Latin is likely to prove less valuable. I say this with pain, since I had a love affair with Latin all through my college course, and occasionally read it now. But the strong tendency in English today is to replace Latinate words with Germanic forms. I have for several years been collecting adjectives and nouns converted by functional shift from verb-

adverb combinations. I have hundreds of them; in many instances they are replacing Latinate terms. Of course I discovered soon after leaving college that the possession of a Latinate vocabulary could at times be disadvantageous, and we all know how the attempt to apply the terms of Latin grammar to English has long hampered our understanding of English structure, and of the desperate struggle linguists have had to deal with old-guard defenders of this Procrustean system.

Of the modern languages, most collegiate freshmen having had French, one should perhaps with many advise its continuance, since the influence of the Norman conquerors of England and the long continuance of borrowing from modern French make it perhaps for our purpose the most useful of European tongues.

Next I should place German; although the borrowing from this tongue has slackened, it has been and will continue to be significant. Of course Italian, Russian, Polish, Pennsylvania Dutch, and several other languages have particular value in certain regions, but more for their own sake than for their influence on English.

Somewhere in college, too, a student should be acquainted with the elements of semantics and semasiology, and gain some notion of phonemics and phonetics, in order to become aware of the treacherous nature of linguistic symbolism. Some of this can doubtless be acquired in courses in communication, but certainly the more promising should have an opportunity to elect a course in General Linguistics with a teacher who is abreast of recent findings in this field.

(1) There is a required sophomore communication course.

(1) Volume II, Number 2, Winter, 1952.

Goals In Teacher Education Programs For Junior High School Teachers Of Language Arts

Arno Jewett

The word "goals" in the title reminds me that we educators like to cling to our old fashioned terminology. In Government circles metaphors have changed during the past 20 years. Whereas we once talked about laying a firm foundation for our projects, we now stress the importance of getting them off the ground. And I am not referring only to space satellites.

In planning a program of teacher education, certain information seems essential:

1. What does the public want and society need in terms of education for its youth? These are the aims of education.
2. What kind of student is being educated: what are his needs, interests, motivations, and growth characteristics? The student is the product of education.
3. What qualities and competencies should a junior high school teacher of language arts possess in order to achieve desired aims in educating boys and girls aged 12-15? The teacher is the primary instrument of education.

Also, in setting up goals, there are certain facts which we need to know for New York State. What is the trend in junior high school growth today? What is the average size of the junior high schools? Where are the three-year junior high schools usually found and the six-year, combined junior-senior high school? What subject-matter combinations involving language arts are prevalent in the three-year junior high school and in the six-year junior-senior high school? What are the implications in block-time scheduling for the preparation of language arts teachers? Who is teaching core? What is taught in core programs? How does core affect teen-agers' reading and writing skills and their understanding and enjoyment of literature?

Office of Education statistics gathered during the past few years have indicat ed that various types of junior high schools are steadily outdistancing the 8-4 type of school organization in the number of pupils enrolled in grades 7, 8, and 9. Our figures for the public secondary schools in New York State in 1952 showed that there were 151 junior

high schools and 451 undivided junior-senior high schools, or a total of 602 out of 950 secondary schools in your State.[1] Approximately half of the pupils in grades 7, 8, and 9 were in some form of junior high school. Over 63 per cent of your public secondary schools in 1952 were either junior or junior-senior high schools. Today, the number is certainly larger. The average enrollment of your junior high schools in 1952 was 854; of your undivided junior-senior high schools, 414.

Almost 68 per cent of your junior-senior high schools in 1952 were in rural communities under 2,500 and 24 per cent were in towns ranging from 2,500 to 10,000. Three-year junior high schools predominated in urban communities of 10,000 or more. Almost 87 per cent of the three-year high schools were in cities of 10,000 or more.[2]

The concern for the boy and girl of 12 and 13 who are leaving childhood and entering the hectic transitional period of adolescence is perhaps the present *raison d'etre* of the junior high school. One of the primary functions of the junior high school is to help the adolescent through this maturational period, at the same time educating him so that he will be prepared to succeed in his school, college, and life work.

To help junior high school teachers know their students better, more and more principals are scheduling block-time classes in which a teacher is with the same class for two or more periods. Although such scheduling arrangements are sometimes called core, or general education, or unified studies, they frequently consist of two subjects taught during consecutive hours with varied amounts of correlation between subjects. In a study completed in 1956, Dr. Ellsworth Tompkins found that out of 61 junior high schools in New York State responding to a questionnaire, 46 reported having block-time classes. (Note: The sample may not be representative.) English and social studies and English and citizenship were the combinations taught in 34 of the 46 reporting schools.[3] Perhaps a tentative conclusion to draw here is that our future English teachers should have a major in English and a major or minor in social studies.

Of course you realize that your teacher education program will, to a certain extent, be based upon data which you collect concerning your own college graduates. For example, where do they accept their first junior high school employment? What subjects do they teach? What does the community expect of them in extra-school service? How long do they stay in their first teaching position? When they leave, where do they accept employment?

As you know, the qualities and characteristics of a first-rate teacher have been described many times. Unfortunately, research has revealed very few factors which correlate closely with successful teaching. Among these are a liking for children, emotional stability, and success in student teaching. In this connection, the 1,650 delegates to the White House Conference on Education submitted a description of a good teacher. Their statement includes most of the general goals for a comprehensive

teacher education program. In its report to President Eisenhower, the committee on "How Can We Get Enough Good Teachers — and Keep Them?" wrote:

> A good teacher is one who has an active interest in children and youth; has a broad educational background; is professionally qualified and competent; possesses good physical and mental health; has a good moral character; manifests a desire for self-improvement; can work constructively with other professional workers, parents, and the community; and is proud of teaching as a profession.

In addition, the subcommittee wrote:

> Every parent wants for his child a teacher with good personality, emotional stability, understanding patience, sincere interest in and respect for others, and good health. All these are the mark of a good teacher, but all together these attributes cannot substitute for the scholarship, the educational poise, the confident feeling of being equal to the challenge of teaching that can come only through preparation of the highest order.

Before we consider specific goals in teacher education programs for junior high school teachers of language arts, we might briefly review what parents and other citizens expect of youth enrolled in the junior high school—realizing, of course, that the junior high school is not a separate segment of our public school system. It is a few critical rungs on the single educational ladder that begins in kindergarten and reaches up into college.

At the White House Conference on Education there was remarkable agreement among businessmen, labor leaders, farmers, educators, and other citizens concerning what our schools should accomplish. In the field of language arts the consensus was that the schools should continue to develop:

1. The fundamental skills of communication—reading, writing, spelling as well as other elements of effective oral and written expression.

This aim headed the list. Parenthetically, the delegates added that schools are doing the best job in their history in teaching these skills, but that continuous improvement is desirable and necessary.

The other aims were basically those you know as the *Purposes of Education in American Democracy* defined by the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association in 1938. In a more specific sense, they were interwoven in the text of Volume I of The Commission on the English Curriculum of the National Council of Teachers of English. How well these major educational concerns have been stated for the junior high school is illustrated by the following paragraph from Volume I, *The English Language Arts*, page 113.

> Junior high school programs in the language arts are being organized around centers of experience of concern to pupils of this age group. Common among these are learning to work together in various ways, living effectively with one's family, taking a part in one's community, entering into and enjoying the American heritage, seeing oneself in the world community, conserving human life and natural resources, achieving and maintaining healthy minds and bodies, making profitable use of

leisure time; penetrating the world of beauty, worth, and value; exploring the world of work and of vocational opportunities; having a good time with books.

The accomplishment of these objectives is dependent to a large degree upon a teacher prepared in the areas of the language arts: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. We can't expect a person trained as a social studies teacher, a science teacher, or a physical education director to teach English well.

If we want adolescents to learn how to live satisfactorily with themselves and others, we want them to find out what the best literature of the past and present—which they can understand—has to offer them. And if we want boys and girls to laugh at the escapades of Red Chief, to sense the loveliness of woods on a snowy evening, and to thrill to the clatter of hoofbeats on the turnpike to Concord, we must have teachers who know and love literature. Teachers who know a smattering of literature cannot help youth realize the fun in books, the aesthetic impact of poetry, and the significance of our literary heritage.

I do not believe these aims can be accomplished by a teacher whose ignorance of literature causes him to teach Masefield's "Cargoes" and Sandburg's "Chicago" because they seem to fit a seventh-grade core unit on Transportation; or by a problem-centered enthusiast who teaches "The Deacon's Masterpiece" because it fits in beautifully with a unit on driver education, which in turn is taught as language arts because students can also read, talk, and listen about the dangers of driving hot-rods recklessly. A student should not have to wait until he has a problem in trout fishing before he can feel the life and movement of "The Brook" by Alfred Lord Tennyson. Problems are important, but there is no reason why a child's educational experiences should be restricted to problems and processes in junior high school English. As the Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table once said, "Just because I like salt doesn't mean that I want to be pickled in brine."

Within the area of general education, the first goal which I suggest is that our prospective language arts teachers have a broad general education which develops in them an appreciation of man's aspirations, struggles, and successes through the centuries as communicated through the media of music, art, architecture, the dance, drama, sculpture, and most important of all—literature. But understanding the dignity of man as transmitted through the symbols of the humanities is not enough. If, as Dr. Vannevar Bush has said, scientific fields such as biochemistry and psychology are in their infancy and if "Science is expanding exponentially" we must train teachers to keep up with the technological world in which they and their pupils live. Too often today the teacher lives in a world of the past and the pupil in a world of the future.

Our future teachers must know the effects science is having on family work and recreation as well as on international relationships. They must realize the significance to themselves and their pupils of living in a

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world with a hydrogen bomb and an atomic battery—both ready for use; of living in a nation whose productivity on the farm and in the factory is almost unlimited; of living in a community exposed to the varied influences of crime comics and *The Atlantic*, of television Westerns and Ed Murrow, and of Elvis Presley and Pat Boone. Future teachers need to appreciate the social complexities of living in a steadily expanding universe, a constantly contracting world, and a rapidly growing nation. They need to understand the causes and possible effects of living in a world pock-marked with ideological conflict and nationalistic ferment; in a nation worried by self-doubt for the first time in a century; in States and cities sometimes fragmentized by racial friction and group tensions.

Our future teachers need to realize how social and economic status generate the motives which in turn affect the achievement of different kids in Elmstown and Jonesville. The boy from a shanty near the tracks who whiles away his hours loafing in a pool hall or tinkering with a hot-rod has motives and goals in his English class which are different from those held by the boy who wants to become a doctor because of the steadying guidance received from his well-educated parents. Too often the teacher knows the latter boy but not the former.

Study of the social sciences should help prospective teachers appreciate the courageous struggle of man to continue upward on the ladder of civilization; also it should reveal the changing nature of the family and the impact of mass media on people's attitudes, beliefs, and wants. A study of science should help future teachers to think rationally and to respect the scientific method. Their learning of a foreign language should awaken an appreciation of different modes of life, plus affording a new look at the structure of the English language. Their study of world history and international relations should probe the basic causes of war and the aspirations of nations, races, and religious groups —as well as the reasons for their differences. And finally, their study of American history and political science should bring about an understanding of and concern for the guarantees in the Bill of Rights, a devotion to the future welfare and security of the United States, and a consecration to the ethical and moral values which are the keystone of our heritage and our future.

The next goal which I suggest is that of acquainting future junior high school language arts teachers with significant literature representative of varied cultures and peoples. Such literary study would also include our American heritage: its concern for freedom, for truth, and justice. It would stress the struggles, toil and sacrifices required to build our Nation. It would show the beauty and grandeur of our country. It would encourage a rational optimism for America's future. Such a goal would involve a study of writers from John Smith to John Steinbeck with emphasis on such authors as Franklin, Irving, Bryant, Emerson, Poe, Longfellow, Holmes, Whittier, Lincoln, Whitman, Twain, Dickinson, O. Henry. It would include modern writers such as Saroyan, Hemingway, Wolfe, Faulkner, Frost, Sandburg, Jesse Stuart, Lew

Sarett, T. S. Eliot, E. A. Robinson, Sara Teasdale, Eugene O'Neill, Thornton Wilder, Stephen V. Benet, Arthur Guiterman, and many more.

Besides their study of American life through literature our prospective teachers should know certain great literary works of the past and present which depict life in distinctive cultural areas of the globe. They should know writers who explain why certain values persist today. In times like these the heavy emphasis on the study of English literature as the *piece de resistance* of our literature program is at least slightly anachronistic. Certainly a survey course in English literature and careful study of Shakespeare as a dramatist and poet, plus a close acquaintance with the works of such men as Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Browning, Stevenson, Kipling, Dickens, Yeats, Masefield, Hardy, and de la Mare is essential for junior high English teachers. Of course, it would be well if we could keep Thomson, Collins, Wycherly, and Crabbe while we added Alan Paton, George Orwell, Andre Malraux, Thomas Mann, Tagore, and Lin Yutang, but the curriculum is short and time is fleeting. Certainly European, Asian, and American folklore should be included. Perhaps our goal here should be to show future teachers how patterns of culture in China, Russia, Central and South Africa, India, and the Near East have evolved and how they are reflected by writers from Homer to Hemingway. Obviously, the study of these writers would be chiefly for the purpose of extending the intellectual horizons of the junior high school teacher. However, such a teacher should be able to use some foreign folklore, short stories, poems, and sketches to help youth understand people in other lands.

Within this area of drama, poetry, biography, and fiction there is another goal which is extremely significant provided we want to use the interests of early adolescents to make reading a lifelong recreational habit and provided we wish to show them how other young people have solved their problems of growing up. This goal is to acquaint our teachers-to-be with the wonderful world of teen-age books by capable authors such as James Street, Fred Gipson, Stephen Meader, Maureen Daly, Carol Brink, Howard Brier, Robert Davis, Elizabeth Foreman Lewis, Esther Forbes, Bud Murphy, Mabel Robinson, Paul Annixter, Mary O'Hara, Elizabeth Gray Vining, Betty Cavanna, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Armstrong Sperry, Laura Ingalls Wilder, Nancy Barnes, Shannon Garst, and many others. Although this list does not offer serious contenders for future Nobel prizes in literature, it does include accomplished writers who generally present a sane and honest picture of teen-age conflicts and ways of overcoming physical and emotional obstacles. There is nothing sentimental, phony, or soap-operish in James Street's *Goodbye, My Lady*, Esther Forbes' *Johnny Tremain*, Mary O'Hara's *My Friend Flicka*, Joseph Krumgold's *And Now Miguel*, Nancy Barnes' *The Wonderful Year*, or Carol Brink's *Caddie Woodlawn*. And for thrills, few classics can equal William Corbin's *High Road Home*, Janet Elizabeth Gray's *Adam of the Road*, Armstrong

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Sperry's *Call It Courage*, Fred Gipson's *Old Yeller*, Robert Heinlein's *Space Cadet*, and Paul Brickhill's *The Dam Busters*.

To help adolescents elevate their level of appreciation and to extend their reading interest, the teacher must know worthwhile teen-age literature of all types, including the classics which have been enjoyed by generations of young people. Without this knowledge the language arts teacher must depend on *free reading* which is usually worth just about what the adjective *free* connotes.

To help language arts teachers keep informed concerning recent literature for adolescents, the Office of Education has prepared Circular No. 450, "Aids for Knowing Books for Teen-Agers." This annotated bibliography includes 24 current reading lists which describe books for junior and senior high school youth and it lists ten periodicals which regularly review teen-age books. Acquainting our prospective junior high school teachers with such book lists and periodicals might, therefore, be another goal of our teacher education programs.

Also, future English teachers can profit by knowing research findings concerning reading interests of junior high school students. This field of study would include research by Esther Andersen, Herbert Bruning, Dwight Burton, Bertha Handlan, Evangeline Malchow, George Norvell, Aubrey Shatter, Ruth Strang, Robert Ridgway, and Robert Thorndike. Teachers should know that most girls who are twelve and thirteen usually like the kind of adventure, animal, humor, and mystery stories that boys like at the same age. Of course, many boys like their adventure stories to be gory. Girls above thirteen like love stories, home and family life fiction, and sentimental and romantic novels; whereas, most junior high boys detest this kind of writing. Science, aviation, hobby and travel books, as well as biographies are currently popular. Teachers should know that where motivation and interest are strong in the reader and where suspense and plot are powerful in the story, youth can read above their normal level with pleasure and profit.

The next and perhaps most obvious goal of all is to teach our prospective teachers how reading is taught from the primary grades through high school. Actually, our goal is to teach them how to develop the following reading skills in their pupils:

1. To figure out strange and difficult words through phonetic analysis, context clues, initial sounds, etc.
2. To define reading purpose
3. To adjust speed to purpose and the density and complexity of ideas in print
4. To locate main ideas, including the author's basic purpose and thesis
5. To recognize the author's tone and implied meanings, especially in satire, irony, and various types of humor
6. To distinguish between significant facts and minor or irrelevant details

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7. To read newspapers, magazines, and other material with sound critical judgment; to distinguish fact from fiction
8. To be able to make sound inferences and draw conclusions based on one's reading
9. To understand the basic principles of elementary semantics as they affect the author's clarity and purpose
10. To know how to discover the author's reputation, biases, and qualifications as related to his subject
11. To know how to locate information in reference books, reputable periodicals, and various literary sources

There are other reading skills related to comprehension of literary types which junior high school language arts teachers must be able to teach. To appreciate poetry, as well as some prose, pupils must know how to follow punctuation signals, to get meaning from inverted sentences, to visualize images, to understand analogies, and to interpret symbols.

In starting a short story or play, they need to get their bearings early by noting time, place, and antecedent action—all of which are often given incidentally by good writers. Early adolescents need help with flashbacks in books like Charles Lindbergh's *The Spirit of St. Louis*. And they need help with multiple meanings—which are the source of confusion in other subjects. For example, to *court* a lady in a *court*, or on a *court*, or before a *court* changes one's environment if not one's purpose. And one of the most important of all reading abilities is to be able to deduce why well-drawn characters behave as they do in fiction and to be able to trace cause and effect relationships, particularly as they affect people's success and failure.

Another of our major goals is to train our future teachers how to teach early teen-agers to write effectively—that is with clarity, honesty, unity, good judgment—and in accordance with conventional usage. To achieve this goal I believe we must do several things. First, we must teach future English teachers how to write straightforward prose which conveys meaning accurately and vividly. Secondly, we need to acquaint future English teachers with the on-going, as well as historical evolution of our language, and how it is different from other languages in inflection, syntax, grammar, and vocabulary. We should acquaint them with the elementary means by which semanticists are helping us to see how language is used to express as well as to conceal meaning and to understand the relationship between clear thinking, precise vocabulary, and effective communication. We need to educate our future teachers in the purposes of language, especially for youth, its basic structure, its patterns, its nuances, and its social effects as explained by intelligible linguists. I am not talking about a course in Anglo-Saxon; neither am I recommending an advanced course in linguistics. Several of your colleges already offer such a course. At Potsdam, I believe it is called "Man and Language; Languages and Man."

Another sub-goal is to acquaint our future teachers of language with carefully conducted research which shows the negligible relationships between knowledge of formal grammar and ability to write, the ineffectiveness of formal diagraming and parsing, the types of grammatical and usage errors students make most often (pronouns and irregular verbs account for about 50 per cent of these) and the fact that students learn to *write by writing* with the personal help of a teacher who knows how to write himself. We need to help our future teachers understand the implications of research findings by scholars like Jesperson, O'Rourke, Leonard, Stormzand, O'Shea, Marckwardt, Walcott, Pooley, Bryant, Fries, and Perrin.

One of the most important goals in educating language arts teachers is the development of ideal vocal qualities which will serve as a model to their students. Also, these teachers should know how to develop good diction, articulation, enunciation, inflection, rate, and pleasant tone in their pupils' speech. Unfortunately, language arts teachers too often neglect to teach speech skills during their regular classes. We English teachers like to talk about every teacher's being a teacher of reading or writing—but in the English classroom we sometimes let students mumble, shout, slur their consonant endings, and read poetry or prose in monotone or singsong fashion. My basic point is that we can't confine instruction in speech to a special course in which pupils deliver a three- to five-minute talk once every two weeks. Too often, teachers insist on a formal classroom situation where only one student can talk—provided of course, the teacher is not talking. We need to train teachers so that they can let their students work in groups and committees—always observing criteria for speaking and listening.

Our future teachers need to teach youth to converse interestingly, to disagree politely, to argue from facts, to listen courteously and thoughtfully. And they need to have something more to say than "hello" and "goodbye." Junior high school English teachers need to know how to help their students do choral reading of poetry, take part in dramatic productions, and see themselves through sociodrama. Both teacher and student need to be sensitized to oral techniques used by outstanding TV and motion picture personalities. Edward R. Murrow, Dave Garroway, Helen Hayes, and even George Gobel can teach the observant listener a lot about how to convey meaning orally.

I shall now move into an area which many of you may think of as professional education—although some of the goals I have already mentioned might be thought of as belonging to this field. Frankly, today's dichotomy between academic and professional education of teachers is, I believe, the awful chasm that must be bridged before we can turn out the best type of beginning teacher. As James Bryant Conant has said repeatedly to college faculties, "In the name of the welfare of American youth, call a truce to the warfare among educators. The time is long overdue for the professors of the liberal arts and of education to join

forces and work together to solve the emergency problems and to improve our schools."

To be able to fulfill one of the unique functions of the junior high school, teachers must know the psychological and physiological nature of adolescents from 12 to 16. Such a goal includes a knowledge of their developmental tasks, their activities and interests, their emotions, their values and ethics, their ambitions, and their personal relationships. Briefly, prospective teachers need to understand the maturity profiles and maturity traits of adolescents.

In discussing the preparation of English teachers, Jay T. Greene, Chairman of the Committee on English Licenses, Board of Examiners, New York City, reported on the opinions which 250 prospective English teachers had of their preparation in 1952. "The largest number," writes Mr. Greene, "had words of praise for their background in education courses, which they said gave them a broad understanding of children. Many emphasized the practical value of their courses in observation and practice teaching. . . . In criticism of their preparation, the largest number spoke of the need for more help in improving their speech and for more opportunities to speak to groups. Many felt a need for more opportunities to apply in practical situations the theories learned in their education courses. The overlapping of content in education courses was criticized by a substantial group."[4] I might add that my experience in other parts of America has indicated that the superior college students are the ones who are most vociferous in condemning the recurring emphasis on the history, philosophy, and general aims of education by professors in separate professional courses.

In these teachers' evaluation of professional training, as reported by Mr. Greene, we note several closely related goals for preparing teachers of junior high school English.

First, prospective teachers need to see the relationship of educational philosophy and the psychology of learning to their courses in methods of instruction and curriculum planning. Whether a broad professional course rather than a series of independent education courses would prevent overlapping and duplication of topics and at the same time show the philosophical and psychological foundations of method and curriculum, I do not know. But such a course might be worth experimenting with. In this respect, our purpose is to place a competent teacher in the classroom—a teacher who can provide for wide pupil differences in aptitudes, attitudes, knowledge, interests, and goals; a teacher who knows the laws of learning, who can plan a sequential program including resource units and lesson plans integrating the language arts; a teacher who knows how to motivate, guide, and lead children; a teacher who knows how to utilize instructional facilities—reference books, audio-visual devices, and the classroom, school and community libraries; and a teacher who can stimulate pupils—slow, average, and gifted—to work at their maximum at whorthwhile educational activities.

A special methods course in the teaching of language arts, accompanied or followed by student teaching, is, I believe, one effective means of developing these educational competencies. As part of the methods course, education students should engage in directed observation of experienced junior high school teachers who demonstrate the methods being taught by the methods professor. In fact, if it is true that "teachers teach as they have been taught"—all education professors—and at least some of the English professors too—have an obligation to serve as models of good instructional techniques. Nothing is more hypocritical than for a methods professor to *lecture* throughout a term on how to carry on group work, how to individualize instruction, and how to use other methods of teaching. But it has been done!

In brief, the professional program should give our future teachers an understanding of the general aims of education, the specific aims of teaching language arts, the high school English curriculum, techniques of lesson planning, instructional materials including textbooks, methods of motivating and individualizing instruction, effective speech techniques, methods of socializing instruction, evaluation techniques, the nature of adolescents, and techniques for elementary research.

The last goal which I shall discuss is to give our future teachers a successful apprenticeship training in teaching junior high school pupils under conditions as similar as possible to those anticipated during the teacher's first few years of employment.

This apprenticeship experience should ensure that the student teacher tries out the methods, ideas, and content which we have already outlined for our program. If there is to be a transfer from theory to practice, certain conditions should prevail. First, the student teacher and the master teacher should want to work together. For his first practice teaching the student teacher should also be able to select one or more classes that he wants to teach. He should observe the class, study its members and leaders, and assume instructional responsibilities gradually by taking roll, doing remedial teaching in small groups, conducting spelling drills, evaluating compositions, giving assignments, administering tests, and helping with extra-class activities.

My experience has been that the key persons in helping the student teacher to acquire the basic teaching skills are the college methods professor who supervises the work done and the master teacher who constantly observes and plans with the student teacher.

Of course, there are many other competencies we should like our future teachers to have. These include ability to direct such extra-class activities as the school publications, class plays, and assembly programs, as well as the desire and capacity to participate in community activities. I know you can think of many other goals.

However, I already feel as though "I have taken all knowledge for my province." The year is not 1592 and I am not Sir Francis Bacon. But I

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was asked to set up some goals for your consideration. Teachers and teacher training schools are now under attack by many sincere groups and perhaps a few others as well. Occasionally I wonder whether the sins of today's parents are not being visited upon their children and the teachers of their children. Teachers of today's children are being criticized for the faults of today's adults, who in turn were educated during the 20's and 30's. Yet some of the critics would have us go back to the good old days of the '20's and '30's. But there is no more to be gained by going back in teacher education than there is in renovating Lucky Lindy's "Spirit of St. Louis" to fly the Atlantic in 1958. "The old order changeth" and teacher education must change with it. For this is a time when "explorers" in the seas, on the land, and in the air are bringing forth wondrous knowledge which can be used for good or evil. The quality of public and private education will determine the goal we reach.

(1) Mabel C. Rice, Statistics of Public Secondary Day Schools, 1951-52. D.C.: U.S. Office of Education Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1950-52. 5 (pp. 44-51.

(2) **Ibid.**, Table 15, pp. 70-71.

(3) Tompkins, Ellsworth. "The Daily Schedule in Junior High Schools." The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, May 1956, pp. 182-207.

(4) Ira E. Greene. "Preparation of English Teachers." The English Journal, XLV, March 1956, pp. 146-7.

Creative Supervision in the Secondary School

Joseph Mersand

It is always helpful in discussing supervision to define one's terms. By creative supervision, I mean the encouragement, stimulation, and guidance of each teacher in your department to his maximum capacity so that he may in turn contribute to the maximum development of every child in his class. To think of creative supervision without considering the effect upon the children is to think of means without awareness of the ultimate end, which is instructional improvement.

If you accept this definition of supervision, then you will agree that there is no one best means of supervision, no one royal road to teacher improvement. What may work successfully with one type of teacher would be destructive and stultifying to another. John A. Bartky in his *Supervision as Human Relations* lists seven types of supervision:

1. Autocratic
2. Inspectional
3. Representative
4. Cooperative—democratic
5. Invitational
6. Scientific
7. Creative[1]

I am sure that there are several other types that are modifications or combinations of these, and that newer concepts will develop in the future.

The modern concept of education for all American youth is predicated on the philosophy that the teacher takes the child where he finds him and by whatever means at his command develops him to his maximum capacity. The supervisor does pretty much the same thing with the teachers under his direction. It is pointless to try to make a Horace Mann or an Elizabeth Peabody of every teacher who works for you, and many of us will settle for written daily lesson plans; for we know that for some teachers that is a professional victory. Common sense and a modicum of knowledge of human nature and human relations will make you realize that there are limits beyond which you cannot go as a supervisor.

Based on my experience as a supervisor of English teachers since 1943 in the senior high schools of New York City and for five summers in the New York City summer schools, and five years in the evening high schools, the following are the guiding principles of my own philosophy of creative supervision:

1. Supervision works best in an environment of mutual respect and understanding.

2. Teacher growth through instructional supervision is a slow process. This means that the supervisor's level of frustration must be high. I personally do not expect even a small change in my entire department before eighteen months have passed.

3. The supervisor himself must be a master-critic; quick to perceive the strengths and weaknesses of every lesson; a master-critic, ready with worthwhile suggestions to improve the lesson; and a master diplomat capable of pointing out to the teacher how she may best improve herself without offending her.

4. Communication lines must be clear between teacher and supervisor. This means face-to-face conferences; small group conferences; department-wide conferences; and the various types of supervisory bulletins.[2]

5. Supervision is both an art and something of a science. Some supervisors may become skilled technicians but never artists; for the art of supervision is not quickly learned, while the preparation of a rating sheet is a comparatively simple process.

6. Methods without materials are as undernourishing as sandwiches composed exclusively of bread. The supervisor must make available textbooks in sufficient quantity; reference books for both teachers and students; audio-visual aids, etc., so that his suggestions for improvement may be more than words on paper.

7. Encouragement is the best fuel to light the flame. This does not mean the phony slap on the back or the comforting arm-around-the-shoulder philosophy; but a genuine desire to see something good and praise the teacher for it. I personally find my day incomplete if I cannot write one or two notes of encouragement. If you look for good things, you will find them. Some supervisors follow the practice of writing notes of commendation at the end of the school year, and the practice is a good one. But on-the-spot encouragement for anything outstanding goes far toward improving teacher morale (never too high these days) and inspiring the teacher to seek ever-higher levels of improvement.

8. Fairness, firmness, and fidelity to the staff are important. Your staff must know that you have no favorites, that all of them are important players on the team. Even your weakest teacher is better than an inexperienced substitute (usually out of license) or no teacher at all because no one will come in inclement weather.

Although some teachers may call you "unreasonable" (as I was because I refused to excuse one teacher from marking Regents), yet you must be firm when you are definitely in the right. I am proud to be considered "inflexible" because I insist that every teacher in my department

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should be prepared daily in writing, should see that her room is attractively decorated; should prevent the floor from being littered and should stand on her feet as much as possible when she is teaching. If I am called "inflexible" for insisting on these minima, I welcome the appellation.

Closely allied to fairness and firmness is fidelity to your staff. Our subject, particularly, is coming under unwarranted attack from unqualified or biased critics. I never permit these attacks to go unchallenged, whether they come in my own school, or in the public press. When your staff realizes that you have faith in them and are confident of their ability to grow, and that you are always ready to give them support when it is needed, you will go a long way toward achieving that mutual respect that is the most nourishing environment for maximum stimulation of teacher growth.

Rome wasn't built in a day and a happy and efficient department takes years to develop. Yet your staff and you must grow or retrograde in these times of many changes. Teachers, like plants, will grow and flourish. Given the proper environment, the right kind of intellectual nourishment and the proper dosage, your staff is bound to grow into an efficient team that makes your work as a supervisor the daily rewarding experience to which we as supervisors have dedicated ourselves.

(1) John A. Barky, Supervision as Human Relations, Boston: D. C. Heath, 1953, p. 14.

(2) See my "Effective Supervisory and Administration Bulletins," Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, December, 1957, pp. 97-118.

Literary Theory And The Teaching Of Literature

Francis X. Connolly

I begin with the assumption that we are still asking these two questions: What literature should we teach in the last two years of high school and the first two years of college? And how should we teach it? We continue to ask these questions even though official curricula and syllabi often prescribe the content of these courses and authorities are at hand, in libraries and in the persons of various supervisors, to tell us what methods of teaching are most appropriate. Yet the experienced teacher is perennially restless because he knows that, between the curricula and the classroom, between the methods officially proposed and the methods actually used, there are at times only faint similarities. Do we really believe that a college course named Shakespeare, the Major Plays, a high school course called the Development of American Literature, means the same thing in different schools, or, indeed, within the same school? If we don't know, the students can tell us that no two courses are alike, save perhaps in a few rigorously regimented schools. In these schools, as in 19th-century France, a doctrinaire principal can pull out his watch, note that it is nine o'clock, and say with the self-satisfaction of a benevolent despot that now every teacher in every class is explaining how the first sentence of the Gettysburg address illustrates the right use of participles.

Literature itself is personal; teachers are persons; so too "Pupils are People," as one Progressive Education Association Report sententiously reminds us. We should not be surprised then if the courses in literature, especially the introductory ones, are characterized by highly personal choices of the literature to be studied and highly personal emphases on those aspects of literature that reflect the personal, social, patriotic, or religious preoccupations of the teacher, the community, and the student. There is no substitute for enthusiasm or personal enjoyment, we keep telling ourselves, even though this sometimes means an almost irrational love affair with some socially significant catcher in the rye.

And yet we know too that, in another sense, the teaching of literature is not wholly personal. We have, I trust, made some progress from the days when the teacher of English was expected to be simply an appreciative enthusiast himself and to make appreciative enthusiasts out of his students. The direction of recent movements in literary study is toward the development of a program as an articulated discipline in which the student is instructed, according to the measure of his abilities, in the science and art of language and of literature. We have seen how a beginning has already been made in the study of the structure of the

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language. A significant number of teachers colleges, and some liberal-arts colleges too, are now preparing teachers to present a new program in structural linguistics. And in the study of literature, we are aware of a new stress on literature as a subject to be studied in addition to the older stress on literature as a body of experiences to be enjoyed. In short, recent developments make it necessary for us to consider just how we can achieve in ourselves and in our students not only the capacities of the appreciative enthusiast but also those of the discriminating scholar-critic. To the motto, "Enjoy, Enjoy," we are attempting to add, "Understand, Understand."

That this new direction, or difference in emphasis, is not a hasty innovation, all will recognize. It is alluded to time and again in many journals and committee reports, notably in *Issues, Problems and Approaches in the Teaching of English*, a very recent publication of the Modern Language Association of America (George W. Stone, ed., Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961) that sums up much of the thinking on our problem during the past 20 years. We may note particularly the suggestions that form the conclusion of this challenging collection of committee reports and individual analyses. In "An Articulated English Program: A Hypothesis to Test," we discover comment like this:

"In the American High School (Grades 9-12), though development of the individual remains the goal, intellectual development assumes sharper emphasis. The student is by this time well-oriented to the study of subject-matter and knows that adjustment to life demands his mastery of certain blocks of knowledge outside himself. . . . He should be increasingly aware of literature as a unique way of reflecting upon and presenting life—a step beyond the story-content and experience-transfer of youthful reading." (p. 237)

The high-school student is expected to have discovered the roots of the knowledge embodied in literature.

"In high school, also, some introduction should be given by the English teacher of the whereabouts of classical expression of ideas that have animated modern literature in Plato, Lucretius, Cicero, Augustine, Dante, and Montaigne. . . ." (p. 238)

Again, in discussing the kind of training desirable in the first two years of college, this report continues to stress the necessity of a wider knowledge and a deeper understanding of literature.

"At this level teachers should be concerned with (a) intensifying the students' interest and their desire to form good standards of judgement; (b) improving their reading skill by demanding more perception and sensitivity; (c) helping them to understand certain of the masterpieces in the English-American tradition; (d) giving them some sense of the continuity of that tradition." (pp. 238-9)

The careful reader of the report will note that the program of English studies is not a mere listing of books to be got through or blocks

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of related information to be acquired but a directed movement from the moment where the student meets literature on the level of shareable experience, through successive stages of greater knowledge, greater understanding and more mature judgment. The end in view, attained by relatively few but, it is hoped, approximated in some measure by all, is the status of the scholar-critic who judges literature on the basis of expert knowledge. The scholar-critic is expected to have mastered what the committee calls the five approaches to literature, namely, textual scholarship, close analysis and interpretation of a literary work, the ability to discover the interaction of works of literature and the history of ideas, the ability to apply critical theories and a cultivated comparative judgment based upon knowledge of a foreign literature in its original language. (See p. 240.)

The program, thus, is incremental; that is, the same kind of literary work, indeed the same works, Shakespeare's plays, for instance, are studied again and again but in different perspectives and with increasing intensity from high school through graduate school. It is also sequential; that is, it provides for the study first of individual works and authors, then of the literary types or genres, then of literature in its historical continuity, then the more difficult problems of scholarship and criticism. In short, the program has a plan, a rationale; it has an end, and the means to achieve that end, a sense of the whole and its related parts. This is to say that it proposes a theory of literary study clear in its main objectives but wisely indistinct in its prescriptions as to the time and the place these objectives should be stressed.

Some of you will have already noted a paradox developing in this brief discussion of some of the findings contained in *Issues, Problems and Approaches in the Teaching of English*. The program of English studies stresses knowledge and discrimination. It places great emphasis upon the humanistic content of literature. For instance, in "Literature and American Education" the distinguished authors set forth "the fundamental reasons why literary studies should form a staple part of our education." Their principal reason is that literature enlarges the life of human beings. It does so, they say, in four ways: by enlarging the readers' experience in human understanding, their experience of other countries, their experience in quality and their experience of the past. (See *Issues and Problems*, p. 169.) At bottom all these experiences are experiences of value, not simply of techniques. They contribute to the student's practical need to understand himself and his society and to communicate that understanding among others. But most of all they are, taken together, "the enabling act of the soul," whereby men come to possess the means of achieving the fullness of their human powers. Yet, while the leaders of our profession have clearly set forth a theory of literary study emphasizing critical values and judgments, nowhere in the actual program conducted in the American schools, save in the area of training for the Ph.D., is there an acknowledged place for the formal study of that theory. Nor does the program make a special place for the kind of critical guidance that is available to the teachers in training.

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Even the books that embody critical theory are prepared for prospective teachers.[1] Few are directed to the student of English.

The paradox then may be stated in the question: Should we not tell all English students, in a more formal and concentrated way, just what we are up to? And if we should, does this not mean that we need to find a place, somewhere between the 11th grade of high school and the sophomore year of college, to present what the ancients called the *Ars Poetica*, or a poetic, what the 18th century called the Elements of Literature, what the 19th century called the Principles of Literary Criticism, and what modern aestheticians call Theory of Literature?

I happen to believe that some kind of poetic, one that sets forth the origin, techniques and end of literature and the various ways it may be studied, is a fundamental necessity in any English program. Poetry, or imaginative literature in general, considered as a school subject rather than a source of personal present pleasure, is incomprehensible without a poetic. Without standards to guide, but not to mortify, his judgment, the student may well adventure among masterpieces without ever discovering them, or, may well discover them, as children do the Easter eggs an artful parent has made it easy to detect, yet not know why a masterpiece is a masterpiece. Perhaps this is why masterpieces, like Easter eggs, are marked with a price: "Shakespeare's *Hamlet*—extremely valuable"; "*Ossian*, once thought valuable but now interesting as an ingenious fake"; "Kilmer's 'Trees'—meretricious and sentimental." With a poetic, on the other hand, the student is prepared to ask important questions about poetry. These questions began when the Greeks inquired why Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* delighted the old and instructed and delighted the young, and will not end even if we come to answer the riddling inquiries that Mr. Eliot has proposed about the pastness of personal poetry and the contemporaneity of the poetry of the past.

A poetic, it seems to me, is as necessary to the study of literature as scientific method is to the study of science, as logic and epistemology are to the study of philosophy. True, it is not a scientific method, nor is it, strictly speaking logical, but it is a method drawn from an age-old yet continuing experience. It does inform and harmonize standards of taste and judgment; it does make for that exactness of description and that developed comparative sense which, as in Coleridge's analysis of Shakespeare's genius, has the force if not the formality of scientific or logical demonstration.

These assertions on the necessity of a poetic do not lack arguments to support them but rather the time to do them justice on this occasion. Moreover, it is difficult to imagine serious objections to the intrinsic value of a study that purges enjoyment of its idiosyncrasy and evokes from scholarship both the decision and the expression of that decision that illuminate and explain and stimulate the study of literature. It is a poetic that not only whets the appetitie for literary experience but also discovers the means of evaluating and re-evaluating that experience. It

keeps re-echoing the tantalizing mystery—"Poetry is more philosophical than history" and more delightful than philosophy because of its gratification of all man's faculties. For poetry is, among other things, the embodiment of wisdom. But, rather than attempt a hasty summary of the intrinsic merits of a poetic, we may more profitably consider several objections to its formal study at the end of high school or the beginning of college.

The first objection comes from an educational publisher of some experience. Having failed to discover a poetic in use in the schools, I put this question to him. "Do you publish or do your well-studied competitors publish a poetic?" He assured me that there was none, so far as he knew, in general use among the high schools; that, although many were available for the college freshmen, few were actually used. For the most part, he said, a poetic, or a theory of criticism, was developed in advanced courses. "That's where it belongs, doesn't it, at the end of the standard courses in composition and literature?"

It does belong there no doubt. A study of the poetic from Aristotle and Plato through Horace, Longinus, Dante, Sidney, Dryden, Johnson, Coleridge, Arnold, down to our day, is a capstone of all serious literary study. But how often is the capstone put in place? At the end of his studies the student who has completed a course in theory will be in the position of an explorer who now knows where he has been. But did he not have a right, along with those who had no course in theory at all, to know beforehand where he was going?

In answer to this my publisher friend said, "We do provide an informal treatment of what you call a poetic. In the introductions to our books on literature, in headnotes and comments, in essays on 'How to Read a Novel' and 'How to Read a Drama,' and so on, we supply the equivalent to a poetic, little by little." The key word to this objection is the word *equivalent*. But may we really say that the apparatus of an anthology, necessarily restricted to the service of the readings, can adequately raise all the questions involved in a poetic, or give all the questions a proportionate treatment? True, skillful comment, searching in crucial poems, the constant exposure to good poetry, all tend to dispose the student to the acceptance, in a subconscious way, of the principles that underlie imaginative literature. But disposition to accept principles may never result in an actual grasp of them. Learning from the experience of particular poems may never result in a thorough scrutiny of the poetic principle, any more than repeated particular experiments necessarily result in the mastery of experimental method. Habitual emphasis on how to read a poem leads one up to but not into the areas contained in the presently neglected questions: What is poetry? What are its elements? What are its values? Why do we read it? *How* is concerned with process; *what* and *why* with values. We all can point to ingenious essays that explain, or explicate, the *how* of a poem, its coherence of theme and image, without ever touching on the human value of the coherent whole. Is it for this reason that, for almost thirty

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years, the majesty of Milton, who sometimes lapsed into the incoherence of mystery, was less explicated than the wry wit of Donne? A poetic may induce an undue severity to innovation, but it is the infallible preservative of achievement.

Perhaps the most important objection to formal study of literary theory clusters around the word *difficulty*. One difficulty concerns the determination of a common poetic theory, that is, one that explains the whole body of writing that is included under the term English literature. Like the British Constitution, or what we call the Western tradition, a poetic is not to be found completely in a single written document with a surrounding glossary of interpretations. One cannot explain it by pointing to mathematically precise description in a dictionary or an encyclopedia, or to works crowned by an Academy or to books chosen by popular vote at conventions of the Modern Language Association or the National Council of Teachers of English. A poetic cannot be captured and reduced to permanent statements. It is rather a body of principles capable of many formulations and indefinite expansion. It is drawn from books that have been found to be indispensable for a full understanding and interpretation of literature. Thus it includes the biographical criticism of Samuel Johnson as well as the analysis of Aristotle, the esthetics of Burke as well as the historical interpretations of T. S. Eliot. The *Poesis perennis* survives hardly because of advocacy or partisanship, rarely because of fashions in ideas, but because it alone embraces the polarities of classicism and romanticism, realism and idealism, convention and revolt, tradition and experiment. It survives because, like imaginative literature itself, it cannot be forgotten without irreparable damage to our collective memory of our most valuable human experiences. Hence to call it difficult is simply to say that the study of literature is itself difficult. We may say further that the greater the values a subject contains, the greater the difficulties we have in studying it. Difficulties then are unavoidable if we are to do justice to the subject we profess to teach.

May we now come to our conclusion by drawing one? The current program of English literature studies in the American schools does set forth a desirable end, the formation of the scholar-critic, and it does set forth the means to achieve it. In this program the emphasis on understanding and evaluation is decisive. Should we not agree that some place should be found for a poetic early in the English program, where we may offer the greatest benefit to the greatest number? And if we, unlike our predecessors in the teaching of English, do not have a poetic, should we not hold ourselves responsible for developing one?

(1) For example, H. L. Burton's Literature Study in the High School, 1959; C. R. Hanna and Mariana K. McAllister's Books, Young People, and Reading Guidance, 1960; J. N. Hook's Teaching of High School English, 1950; Lou La Brant's We Teach English, 1951.

Learning To Speak And Learning To Read

Isadore Levine

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A study of the language achievements of preschool children may help answer some questions frequently asked by composition specialists and point to some new directions in reading instruction.

One of the more recent statements of the problems confronting teachers of writing is phrased thus:

> "How does a writer (or speaker) actually generate the sentences he uses in discourse? How is he able to make up sentences that he has never seen or heard before? What are the exact relations between writing and speaking? . . . What is the relation between the habit of wide reading and skill in writing?" (Albert Kitzhaber, "4C, Freshman English and the Future" in the Oct. 1963 issue of *College Composition and Communication*)

Although we can agree with the author that solutions to these problems are difficult, we should be able to make some educated guesses which can be affirmed or denied through experimentation. Logically we might begin our explorations with the procedures unconsciously followed by those who are learning to speak, the infant babblers.

We know that baby Johnny's first experiences with language are secured *via* auditory and vocal organs. The child may use his eyes to watch the speaker, but the major organs of communication are the ear and the mouth. For the first five years of his life the average youngster will depend on these two media of expression for speech and language. It is only when he enters school that the child will begin to translate his spoken words into specific graphic symbols. That is, his first year at school will compel him to familiarize himself with his language *via* eye and hand.

Just how familiar does Johnny become with the language through hearing and speaking? A little calculation will reveal that a child hears and uses some 20 million words during his three or four preschool years. As described thus by Dr. Ruth Strickland,

> "A child of three or four has been estimated to be linguistically inactive only 19 minutes of his waking day with four minutes his longest period of silence. He says approximately 7600 words per day at three and 10,500 at five." (*The Language Arts in the Elementary School*, 80)

This means that Johnny has interpreted and composed some two to three million sentences before he sets foot in our schools. He has understood or formulated hundreds of thousands of simple, complex, and compound sentences; he has synthesized every part of speech into countless phrases and clauses; and he has used rationally, though unconsciously, such concepts as gerunds, participles, strong and weak

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verbs, perfect tenses, the imperative mood, the passive voice, phonemes, headwords, and a host of other notions created by linguists who have given these identities a local habitation and a name.

Furthermore, and very significant for reading teachers, Johnny has learned to observe the signals of the English language. Thus he knows that something is wrong when he hears such sentences as:

> The two boy were hungry. Yesterday Eddie sleep a long time.
> Eddy likes to sleeping. Sleep makes he feel sometimes tired.

He realizes that *two* signals a plural form; *yesterday* signals a past-tense form; *to* signals an infinitive rather than a participle; *makes* signals the objective form of the pronoun in this context; and *feel* signals the word order *tired sometimes*, rather than *sometimes tired*.

During the early stages of learning to read, Johnny's anxiety to identify each isolated word in print correctly will affect his sensitivity to language. Unless he is constantly cautioned to compare what he reads with what he has learned about the language through listening and speaking, his eye will compel his ear to accept such language fallacies as the following:

> The boys took the *house* to the stable. Sleep makes him feel tired *something*. The little *boys saw* hungry. Yesterday Eddy *sheep* a long time.

The experiences which shaped the oral language Johnny takes to school as his basic intellectual treasure should help us discern new avenues of approach to reading instruction.

No one spends time systematically teaching the child to create the millions of phrases and sentences which help him to communicate effectively. A mother, for example, does not plan to have her two-year-old begin using simple phrases because research workers have found that these are in common usage at that age. In fact, one speech expert characterizes her efforts to help the infant to speak as follows:

> "An authority on child care once said that children learn to speak not because of parental teaching but in spite of it. The average child certainly does seem to exhibit a remarkable ability to acquire speech when the teaching is so poor that it hardly merits the name. All that most young parents know of teaching of talking is that they should hold out an object and repeat its name over and over. Meanwhile, they hope that the miracle will happen, and it usually does. But some children need more skillful teaching and do not acquire speech until such teaching is forthcoming." (*Speech Correction Principles and Methods* by Charles Van Riper, Prentice Hall, 1954, 141)

Although Van Riper imagines that it is a miracle that children do learn to speak, he does not expect such prodigies in the development of reading skills. In an earlier chapter, he asserts:

> "It is true that many children learn to speak without any conscious or deliberate teaching on the part of their parents. Indeed, some children develop speech despite incredibly poor teaching methods, emotional conflicts, and parental neglect. In a similar manner, even though some children have learned to read by spelling out Burma-Shave signs along the highway, we still employ elementary school teachers who spend years preparing for their task of teaching children how to read. The skills

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involved in speech are far more complex than those in reading, yet how many parents have ever read a word on the subject of teaching a child to talk."

The authors of *The Torch Lighters — Tomorrow's Teachers of Reading* might disagree with the above statement on the preparation of reading teachers. Furthermore, some reading experts would dispute the pronouncement concerning the relative complexities of the skills of reading and speaking. No doubt few teachers of reading would favor a plan to entrust reading instruction to the parents on the argument that the child who learned to *speak* successfully at home could therefore learn to *read* successfully at home.

Yet we may well ask the question:—Why do almost all children learn to communicate by voice and ear, while a large percentage of them never reach a happy self-confident level of success *via* eye-and-hand (*i.e.*, writing) communication?

We would like to think that reading is a more formal accomplishment requiring more disciplined training, that speech is a necessity for survival where reading is not. (The blind, deaf, and mute do learn to communicate, too.) However, what is far more likely to explain Johnny's failure with print is his paucity of reading experiences as compared with his plethora of speaking experiences.

In learning to speak, the child, to some extent, follows the pattern set by primitive man who produced sounds in sufficient repetition to create a system of communication; that is, the quantity of sound imitations yielded the quality of recognizable words. The child babbles and chatters endlessly in his first two years, until the sheer quantity of words he hears and the number of rational sounds he enunciates flower into the meaningful messages enabling him to take a normal place in the world of communication. It should be added that his parents and relatives will approve and encourage his creative speech efforts and tend to disregard his countless language errors. To repeat, if we consider the miracle by which the untaught child, regardless of nationality or intelligence, learns to speak the language of his parents to the point where he is the envy of the most educated foreigner, we must conclude that the staggering number of words, phrases, and sentences heard and used over a period of years in a mentally hygienic atmosphere is the key factor in this achievement.

This emphasizes the major weakness in our reading instruction. Johnny does not attain quality reading (effective communication with a writer) because he does not experience quantity reading; that is, because he does not concentrate visually on millions of words annually just as he heard and spoke that number in his nonreading years. Too many Johnnies are still in the "babbling" stage of reading because they do not spend sufficient hours with print, daily and weekly. The pupil with limited reading practice resembles the youngsters described thus by Van Riper:

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. . . "children who have lost their hearing as a result of illness or accident frequently lose intelligible speech to such a degree that many of the speech sounds are never regained."

Just how many words does the average schoolboy peruse annually? During his first three years, when word-recognition skills are the focal point, he will speak perhaps 5,000 to 10,000 words daily, but will not cast his eye on more than a tenth of that number. This is to be expected.

However, when he reaches the fourth grade and has learned to cope with a majority of the sounds of the written language, he should be approaching independence in reading through a daily diet of some 7,500 words. Research reveals that an average fourth-grader can read and understand some 4,000 to 6,000 words. (Arthur I. Gates in the May 1962 issue of *The Reading Teacher*) Instead, it is doubtful that Johnny reads 2,000 words of narrative and other reading matter daily in the average classroom.

Unfortunately, we do not provide opportunity for daily silent reading as a recognized necessity in establishing the reading habit and fostering intellectual growth. We imagine that the home is the proper place for silent reading and that it is a waste of time to allot 30-45 minutes daily to an activity in which the teacher plays but a minor role. Although reading can take place only between the reader and print, as instructors, we do not hesitate to interfere with that twosome constantly. We have established hundreds of reading skills and justify our separation of a pupil from his book by insisting that these skills must be taught in the classroom before we can permit Johnny to read at some length by himself.

We can only speculate on Johnny's success with language if he had been deprived of voice and hearing for two-thirds of his waking day during his toddling years. But we cannot conceive of a healthy teenager unable to communicate in speech. If we assume that every child, not just many, learns to fulfill his tasks of communication required by voice and ear because of the sheer accumulation of verbal experiences, we can venture the hypothesis that the youngster will acquire similarly the complexities of reading communication through saturate contact with print.

Certain objections to this proposal of a definite period for quantity reading daily will be considered and answered below.

1. Won't the mechanical concern for the number of words read emphasize mere word reading rather than meaning and thought?

There is no doubt that if the child could read silently without garnering any ideas or emotions from the page, such efforts to improve reading would be fruitless. However, only the occasional rare child can continue running his eye over thousands of words without absorbing both interest and enthusiasm for what is communicated.

2. Why not continue the present practice of depending on out-of-school hours for extensive reading?

This would be wise if the teacher could direct the learning situation in pupil homes. But she is unfamiliar with the physical, psychological, and cultural conditions of most pupil homes. Certainly the vast majority of parents who avoid books provide strong incentive for their children to emulate such neglect of literature. Unfortunately, there are too many such homes. A large percentage of adults today do not have worthy reading habits because the schools they attended regarded silent reading as a chore to compete with such home interests as the radio, personal hobbies, family socialization, and domestic tasks.

3. What can be done for the pupils who cannot or will not participate in this program?

Although these groups seem to create problems, the teacher will discover that the class atmosphere during these book hours resembles that of the occasional intervals devoted to testing. The nature of examination periods compels individual effort from the least competent student. When it becomes obvious to the recalcitrant youngster that all his classmates are busy with a task where results are recorded daily, it will be almost impossible for him to occupy himself otherwise. As for the student whose sight vocabulary is limited, the teacher will need to supply special reading materials to suit his abilities and interests.

4. How can we evaluate such classroom practices?

Standardized silent-reading tests may be administered to ascertain progress in reading. However, we should not be unduly alarmed if the pupil does not achieve month-for-month growth in test scores at first. The parent needs no standardized test to assure her that once her Johnny begins to use words orally he will develop successful communication in time.

It is most important for the child to note the number of words and pages read daily on appropriate prepared forms. The titles of books should be entered on the pupil's permanent record and considered part of his annual progress. Such notations are excellent for the child's morale regardless of his reading ability.

5. What is the role of reading skills in quantity reading?

While no basic change in the prevailing methods of teaching word-recognition skills is contemplated in this philosophy of reading, it is vital to have much more time devoted to practical use of the child's knowledge of the language signals discussed previously. In a lesson on phonics, for example, the teacher should take advantage of Johnny's familiarity with the structure and meaning of sentences. Thus in exploring the phonogram, "fl," the instructor should elicit the nonsense resulting from each incorrect choice of word in reading the following sentences.

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Mother put the _____ in the cake. (flew, floor, flat, flame, flour) Baby likes to play on the (fly, flea, flat, floor, flame)

Children should be given extensive practice in correcting such errors as the following.

Mother put the baby on the fly. The baby lay floor on her back.
Mother began to put flame in the cake. She brushed a flour from the baby.

Thus Johnny will be learning phonics in the meaningful language he is accustomed to and he will be preparing for his silent reading.

6. Why not use an auditorium for mass silent reading and thus relieve some teachers for other responsibilities?

Although such an administrative measure might seem practical, it should be avoided. Reading guidance is most effective when Johnny knows that the teacher is interested in his daily achievements. The anonymity of an auditorium would encourage undersirable reading habits.

7. Can all books for the appropriate school level help achieve the aims of quantity reading?

Only the short story, the long story or novel, and the intimate biography can be used to gain our ends in this program. A tale facilitates the enjoyment of thousands of words at one sitting. Most dramas, poetry, the informative essay, the periodical, and the subject text must be studied and cannot be read rapidly despite the pupil's interest in the content. It is *not* wise to encourage the children to interrupt silent reading to consult dictionaries.

8. When should children begin this program of quantity reading? As soon as pupils have mastered a sight vocabulary of 100 words they should be given a quiet period where they can read books described thus by Dr. Anne M. Fagerlie. ("Books for Beginning Readers" in the March 1962 issue of *Elementary English*)

"However, a book for beginning readers must have something more than a controlled vocabulary. The story should have such a strong interest pull that the child does not want to put the book aside until he has finished reading it. Such a book is "The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Suess."

The time allotment can be increased so that children in the intermediate grades will be reading some 5,000-10,000 words daily. In the junior high school, this plan will need to be implemented by all subject teachers so that one period a week will be devoted to silent reading in each content area.

9. How does such a program of quantity reading differ from the individualized reading program?

Since the proponents of individualized reading agree with the traditional explanations of how children learn to read, their proposals on method can differ little from those offered by the promoters of the

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basal-reader group method. Thus, the N.Y.C. Board of Education monograph, *A Practical Gude to Individualized Reading* (1960), notes that the essential concepts of the project were shaped by studies which

> "revealed that many teachers, considering the time and effort they put forth, were not completely satisfied with their reading programs — neither with their methods nor their results.
> . . .Some of the practices were merely producing textbook readers instead of real readers."

This somewhat uncrystallized criticism of existing practices could not lead to much more than some well-meant tinkering with procedures.

In summary, it may not be difficult to believe that the child's early language maturity was registered with his daily stint of words and sentences. One may not be so ready to accept the analagous concept, that the youngster at school can derive the same self-confidence, self-reliance, and pleasure from the written language as from the spoken language, if he is trained to read thousands of words as systematically as he breathes. But without some abiding conviction based on obvious results, in this case the child's phenomenal success with speech, we can but flounder from one proposed practice to another for lack of the philosophical moorings to steady our procedures.

Without quantity reading, our pupils are in the same predicament as Macbeth when his dilemma was described thus:

> New honours come upon him,
> Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
> But with the aid of use."

Three Ideas About English

James R. Squire

The learning of English must concentrate on the "structure of the subject" and avoid attempting to "cover" the entire subject field.

The real "knowledge explosion" is in the humanities, not in the sciences, according to Father Walter Ong, who asserts that we have acquired more humanistic knowledge during the last two decades than during the last several hundred years. Charles Ferguson, Director of the Center for Applied Linguistics, makes an equally drastic assertion. "We have learned more about language learning during the past five years," he says, "than during the past five hundred." Most of us haven't even begun to absorb this new information. It should be clear that in English as in other fields of study new knowledge is being accumulated so rapidly that it is impossible for any single specialist to achieve complete mastery of the content of a field. What this means for teaching is that we need to concentrate on the basic ideas or basic structure of each discipline (or in English of the several disciplines of rhetoric, literature, and linguistics), rather than on a unified presentation. By developing insight into the great, simple unifying conceptions which bring unity to a field of study, the individual gains not only some control of the individual illustrations but an awareness of structure which will make it possible for him to cope with future knowledge in the field.

Many recent attempts have been made to define the structure of English—the basic concepts of our field. In essence the *new* language, the *new* literary criticism, and the *new* rhetoric are such attempts. The papers presented at the first two national conferences on English education show the influence of such thinking.[1] Hans Guth's new book on the content of English offers impressive insights.[2] Many of the curriculum study centers are looking on the structure of English in unique and interesting ways. Although they may differ on precise illustration, they seem agreed that there are controlling ideas which bring unity and cohesiveness to learning and which should free student and teacher from the futile attempt at coverage of all the details of the subject.

It is too soon to tell which of the structural models being tested at these curriculum centers may emerge as dominant. It is not too soon to suggest some of the directions which the search is taking. The literature program seems likely to change most radically as we give up the demand for incomprehensive coverage (the history of English literature taught to children who have never studied the history of England by teachers who have all too seldom studied English history themselves). Rather the newer programs seem more to offer an introduction to the study of

literary genres—examining in depth fewer works but works more carefully selected and explored for their many implications. The methods of organizing literary study seem less controversial than a few years ago. Whether we use thematical or topical approaches, stress social ideas and values, concern ourselves with ethical problems, or engage in formalist study seems today to depend more upon the particular literary work we are studying than upon any Procrustean predisposition. Modern literary criticism has perhaps taught us that each method of critical analysis yields new understandings of certain selections; studies like the *American Adam* and the *Power of Blackness* set Emerson and Thoreau and Hawthorne and Melville against the continuing development of American ideas; analytical studies by Robert Heilman and Wayne Booth open our eyes to the strengths and weaknesses of Henry James; the archetypal criticism of Northrop Frye brings new urgency to programs for teaching myth and reservoir literature.[3] We need all approaches, reinterpreted and introduced as approaches for study. And we need wide reading also to supplement such concern with individual texts. As that distinguished scholar, Helen C. White, said in her address two years ago to the Modern Humanities Research Association, "It is quite true that wide reading can often be aimless and without critical direction and reflection, but it is no less true that critical reflection without wide reading can be a very sterile thing and even perverse."[4]

In language, concern with the structure of ideas is leading to many kinds of perceptions. We all know that we have at least three or four scholarly grammars bidding for attention: traditional, structural, transformational, and tagmemic, to mention the common terms. With respect to the essential nature of our subject, the really fundamental learning seems to be awareness that the English language is so complex and varied that it can admit many varieties of categorical analysis, each of which has something important and new to contribute. Perhaps one of the most important concepts which our students must learn is one which many of us did not learn—and hence suffered more than we should have—that any system of grammar is merely an arbitrary way of classifying linguistic behavior and that the English language itself is so rich and so complex that no perfect method of classification is ever likely to emerge. We need to welcome these new approaches to studying language just as we do the varied approaches to literary analysis, not to feel we must choose between them.

This means not, I think, that we teach everything to all students at all levels. Indeed the very economy dictated by the search for basic unifying ideas requires careful selection. The teacher, hopefully, will command more applications than will the children in his classes. He will not attempt to present everything he knows about transformational theory or tagmemics—even when he does acquire such knowledge—but he will strive to see whatever he does present is related to what he knows is fundamentally true about the structure of English. The classroom approaches based on structural grammar emerging from the University of

Minnesota may offer us one way; the rhetorical theory based on the tagmemics of Kenneth Pike at the University of Michigan suggests another; Albert Kitzhaber's junior-high-school program for studying transformational grammar seems to be working well in first tests in the Oregon schools. The variety is healthy and augurs well for the future of our subject.

Pupils learn the intellectual constructs in any subject area through circular processes.

Teaching in a subject area like English can be so organized that students may be introduced to basic ideas through simple illustrations much earlier than customarily thought, then reintroduced to ever more complex examples as they progress through the grades.

Take the learning of pattern in language, for example. As the distinguished literary critic Northrop Frye said in *Design for Learning*, one of the more important recent books on curriculum in English, "It is easy to forget that a student's earliest experiences with form and pattern are his experiences in the English language. . . . Long before he came to school, he began to grasp the sense of form and pattern necessary for using our complex communication system. . . . Literature also can be understood only against the design and pattern which is called language, for language provides the primary materials out of which literature is made."[3]

Thus concern with the patterns of language, with repetition and simple manipulation at the elementary level, may lead in time to awareness of linguistic patterns in writing as well as in speech, to observing the patterns used by other writers as well as the restrictions which such patterns place on each author and how the author solves the problems imposed by such restrictions. At every other grade level or so, the concepts would be introduced anew with ever more complex examples.

The interrelationships of aspects of the English program also become critical if certain basic concepts are to be stressed throughout the program. For some time now leaders in English and the English curriculum like Harold B. Allen, Priscilla Tyler, and H. A. Gleason have talked about a language-based curriculum—one in which the total instructional program from grades 1-12 gains strength and solidity from relating its parts to a central conception of its whole. Our failure to see that the teaching of reading, spelling, usage, grammar, and speech is held together by certain common conceptions has greatly limited the possibilities for planning a truly developmental curriculum, much less one founded on basic conceptions of our subject. Too often we still find English taught virtually as a series of separate subjects—spelling on Monday, vocabulary on Tuesday, writing on Wednesday—or in the elementary school, reading from 9:00 to 9:30 and spelling from 11:10 to 11:40—perpetuating needless confusion about the design of our subject in the minds of our students.

Yet we know today that these subjects are not as separate as we once had made them. In San Diego, Van Allen has shown how early writing experiences can contribute to reading. The impressive i/t/a experiments in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, seem to do as much to awaken the child's awareness of the richness of the language that he writes as of the language that he reads. The Oregon Curriculum Study Center is testing a progressive study of rhetoric in the high school related to both oral and written language; the exciting new language-based programs for teaching reading are usually based on the same point of view toward the structure of English sounds and sentences as are subsequent approaches to language study (avoiding the radically different, usually conflicting notions existing in many present reading programs). There is hope even that the work of modern scholars will bring sense to the teaching of spelling, relating it once again to the study of reading and language, rather than isolating it for fear that interference in the learning of children may occur if too many different conceptions of the English language happen to be introduced. (Of course interference can be expected if we are teaching students to spell a different language from the one we are teaching them to read and write! It is this condition that has caused many of our basic problems.)

The new approach to curriculum here, as in many other areas, seeks the central ideas which tie spelling, language, and reading together and base instruction on them. Fortunately, Paul Hanna and others have just completed a monumental study of English spelling which shows the regularity of phonological representations in English orthography, *i.e.*, the regularity with which sounds are reproduced in written English, and suggests that a pedagogical method based upon aural-oral cues to spelling (similar to the aural-oral cues being introduced into reading tasks) may be more efficient in teaching than present methods relying primarily on visual and hand-learning approaches.[6]

In the teaching of rhetoric and writing too, theoretical understandings seem to be emerging, understandings introduced in special fashion at various levels, understandings which gradually may bring some conception of unity to study at different levels. The absence of intellectual constructs was noted this year by a panel of rhetoricians which characterized the pre-modern classroom, the one predating modern rhetorical studies, as follows:

> Looking cynically at what was happening in the classroom—and what often still happens—one would find a variety of related subjects replacing rhetoric and the study of composition surviving mainly in the assignment and criticism of the weekly theme. Invention had become mainly a matter of assigning a book of readings presumably to provoke thought or to stimulate ideas for writing. Disposition was likely to be a drill on the form for an outline. Elocution or style was likely to be mainly a workbook drill on usage. There was obviously, and still is, need for a new rhetoric.[7]

This new rhetoric—emerging from modern linguistics, usage, semantics, philosophy, and studies of classical rhetoric—promises a greater awareness of the constructs through which unity can be achieved and

developmental reasoning through circular processes obtained. Until modern rhetoricians show us more about the simple unifying ideas, we probably shall continue to flounder. Fortunately, a series of special programs on modern conceptions of rhetoric are being planned for this year's Boston convention of the National Council of Teachers of English.

No single instructional approach is alone successful in teaching any subject or any segment of a subject. Approaches to learning must be found which are appropriate to the structure of the discipline.

Concern with the various patterns for teaching have been with us for some time now. The Trump Plan, the Diederich or Rutgers Plan, the Lakewood-Decatur Plan, the Melbourne Plan—these signify "thrusts" or "breakthroughs" or, more modestly, attempts to achieve more efficient learning. Our journals today are filled with charges and countercharges concerning lay readers, overhead projection, language laboratories, paraprofessional help, and reorganization of the school day. Not always are the new approaches advanced because they are uniquely appropriate for instruction in English, even less often because they advance students' learning in English. And yet in the long run the be-all and end-all of such approaches can only be found in their relation to the instructional program.

As one looks over the experimentation from coast to coast, patterns are difficult to determine. During recent months, I have studied new approaches to teaching in some 23 separate high schools in almost as many states; yet I am loath to comment on any clearcut trends. Several tendencies seem manifest, however, all related to achieving variation in instructional planning.

a. *Variation in the Amount of Time Needed for Instruction*

Do students require instructional time almost in inverse proportion to their IQ's? Some schools seem to think so and offer up to a half-day for independent study during grades 11 and 12. Melbourne High School in Florida requires slower students to devote twice the number of minutes to English as do average or advanced pupils. Some believe that five hours of English time is necessary at the intermediate and junior-high levels, but that this may be decreased to no more than two teaching sessions per week in grades 11 and 12. Some 26 Detroit high schools are demonstrating that such a program will work. In one California junior high school, English is divided into modules of 30 minutes, and each Friday for each class the teacher indicates the number of modules he will need for the following week—three or six, or fourteen, or twenty, as the case may be. Such is the wonder of the automatic data machine that a new class schedule can be punched out each week.

b. *Variation in the Kinds of Material Needed for Instruction*

A national conference of High-school English chairmen this year recommended some 500 appropriate paperback titles in every

English classroom, as well as an overhead projector, a flexible audio-visual unit (with earphones to make possible group and individual listening exercises which do not disturb the class). Meanwhile "systems" approaches to reading, literature, and composition are growing. These are packaged units of study, often programed, which seek to combine books, drill sheets, and audio-visual materials which have a single unifying effect. The impact of the national Title III programs on supplementary book and equipment purchasing remains to be seen. One shudders, however, to think of unused rooms of reading machines already accumulated in some schools throughout the country. Insight and imagination are surely called for in processing such orders.

c. *Variations in Approaches*

Seminars for advanced students—at least twice weekly for groups of not more than 15—are regularly part of the English program in Norridge, Illinois, and Jegerson County, Colorado. In Chicago, some 2,000 high-school students at Marshall High School regularly master standard informal English dialect by using tape recorders. In the elementary classrooms of Knoxville, Tennessee, teachers and supervisors struggle to learn what linguists can offer them concerning the midland dialect so that they can better help their children with the phonemes of standard informal English. In Detroit, specially printed readers are being prepared for disadvantaged children. In Dallas, Texas, both teachers and students learn structural grammar *via* an educational television series. Creative-language play in the child's own non-standard English dialect is becoming a regular activity in many of our cities; children must learn to express ideas in the only dialect they know, even while they are gradually introduced to another manner of speaking. In rural areas like Alamo, Nevada, programed learning emerges as a blessing. With only four teachers and 27 students, how else would you teach all that must be embraced by the modern high school? The English program there is divided into 495 assignments from grade 7 to grade 12. There surely is progression at one's natural rate!

At Nova High School in Florida, it is possible for teachers to tape-record their own lectures and deposit them in the library. An absent student or one seeking a review of classwork merely enters a small booth, dials an appropriate number, and listens to the recorded message on the earphone. Television also may be dialed at this school, where one class is wont to prepare a TV tape of a scene from "Macbeth" for showing subsequently to other pupils. The world of 1965 is indeed a magic world in terms of approaches to learning.

The variations noted here represent only some of the experimentation under way throughout the country. The conception of an English classroom and English laboratory unique to our subject is only just beginning to emerge. Probably in this area, more than almost any other, we shall see important changes during the next few years. The publica-

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tion this fall by the Council of a special report on the organization and supervision of high-school English programs should push our thinking well along.[8]

(1) Dwight Burton, **English Education Today**, (Champaign: NCTE, 1964); Stanley Keagler (ed.), **The Changing Role of English Education**, (Champaign: NCTE, 1965).

(2) Harry Grith, **English Today and Tomorrow**, (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964).

(3) R. W. B. Lewis, **The American Adam** (University of Chicago, 1955); Harry Levin, **The Power of Blackness** (Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1958); Wayne C. Booth, **The Rhetoric of Fiction** (University of Chicago, 1961); Robert B. Heilman, "The Turn of the Screw as a Poem," in Wilbur Scott (ed.) **Modern Approaches to Criticism** (Macmillan).

(4) Helen C. White, **Changing Styles in Literary Studies** (Cambridge University Press, 1963), 22.

(5) Northrop Frye, **Design for Learning** (Toronto University Press, 1961).

(6) Paul R. Hanna and others, **Linguistic Cues for Spelling Improvement**, Cooperative Research Project 1991 (U. S. Office of Education, 1965).

(7) Robert Gorrell, "Mighty Like a Whale — A Report on Rhetoric," **College Composition and Communication** (1965), in press).

(8) James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, and Robert Lacampagne, The Organization, Administration and Supervision of High School English Programs, (Champaign: NCTE, in press).

Literature And Tests

Alan C. Purves

The title of my talk contains within it something of an oxymoron, in that it joins two antithetical activities, the humanistic encounter with literature, and the mechanical appraisal of education. The two might even be thesis and antithesis in some Hegelian dialectic. What, then, is the third term, the English teacher? Is he perhaps the synthesis? Is he, rather, a poor functionary caught on the horns of a dilemma? Before I answer that question, let me define the two other domains.

The nature of criticism has concerned me for the past two years, during which I have been engaged in a project for Teachers College and the UNESCO Institute for Education in which the writings of students about a literary work are to be compared. In our search for a means to compare these writings we turned to current criticism, looked at such terms as neo-Aristotelian, new, formalist, neohumanist, among others, but rejected these labels as finally undescriptive. They do not really differentiate the writings in an anthology of modern critics and they certainly are not applicable to a high-school essay on "Ozymandias," good as that essay might be. With the help of a great number of eminent critics and teachers, and after scrutinizing the essays of some 500 students (American, English, Belgian, and German), we derived what we call the elements of writing about literature. These elements—there are seventy-odd of them—describe the procedures used in any critical or interpretive discussion. Each element is, we think, neutral in its definition; in combination, the elements can describe the writings of any critic.

The elements fall into four general categories: engagement, perception, interpretation, and evaluation. The first category includes the critic's stated reaction to the work or its characters, his discussion of the vicarious experience as it relates to himself, and his impressions of the work. The second covers the various compenents of the work—its language, imagery, and content and their combination in tone and rhetoric, as well as the literary nature of the work—the fact that it is a specific occurrence in a larger phenomenon called literature. Perception, then, is analytical or classificatory—it sees the work as a self-contained object or as a part of the literary whole which needs to be placed in relation to the whole. Interpretation, the third category, is that process by which the reader relates the literary work to the nonliterary world, whereby he invests it with meaning. He does this by showing that the work imitates the world, that it presents a typological view of the world, or that it comments on the world. That is to say, he interprets the work as mimetic, symbolic, or moral. Each of these is subdivided according to different modes of interpreting the world—the psychological, the social, and the political, the historical, the ethical, the aesthetic, and

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the archetypal or mythic are the modes common to literature and epistemology, if I may use that term. The last category is that of evaluation, which we have divided into elements according to the criterion used. It seems there are nine criteria: that of effect, that of form, that of rhetoric, that of genre, that of tradition, that of intention, that of mimetic plausibility, that of thematic sufficiency, that of symbolic plausibility, that of morality, and that of multifariousness.

These elements we have tested against the essays of a great number of students and several critics, and we find that of these essays no sentence that deals with the text fails to fall into one of the seventy-odd pigeon-holes. Let me say that we have a large pigeon-hole—almost a dust-bin—for digressions, statements about the reader's or the writer's life, statements that do not deal with the reader's encounter with the particular work he is discussing. To summarize, these elements describe the four major stances a reader takes in relation to a work at hand: that which sees the work as affecting him personally, that which sees it as a distinct entity, that which relates the work as object to the reader's milieu, and that which judges the work.

To turn to objective testing—that is, the testing of knowledge and understanding in order to measure the ability of a student—I shall not enter into a discussion of its merit, but shall simply accept its existence. As Banesh Hoffman has repeatedly pointed out, this sort of testing must be free of ambiguity, in the sense that there can be for the intelligent student only one unequivocally best answer and that the question must be so directed as to make only one answer truly apposite. In a discipline like mathematics or in a particular area of a discipline like literary history, objective testing is rather simple. Two and two do equal four and Shakespeare (or some other author of the same name) wrote *Hamlet*. For those interested in literature and education, however, the question of the authorship of *Hamlet* is relatively unimportant compared with questions of the ability to deal with a literary text.

Can such an ability be measured? Let us take a passage and see what questions we can ask about it. I have chosen this little quatrain because it is simple and because it illustrates the problem nicely.

> Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall;
> Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
> All the king's horses and all the king's men
> Couldn't put Humpty together again.

We can ask several trivial questions: What is the scansion and what is the rhyme scheme of the poem? What happens to Humpty? What would a prose paraphrase of the second couplet be? More complex questions might include: What is the structure of the poem? (The answer to this is that one line is devoted to Humpty's prelapsarian state, one to his fall, and two to the failure of resurrection or reconstruction.) What produces the irony of the situation? (The answer to this is that soldiers and horses—noticeably clumsy things—try but fail to restore the *status*

quo). What is the point-of-view of the speaker? (Detatched, I would say). And what is Humpty? (The answer is that Humpty is a fragile being.)

Having gone this far, we now see that there are other points one might want to make about this poem. The first is that Humpty is an egg —but can we assert that? The second is that Humpty is a symbol—perhaps of a government, perhaps of a religious power, perhaps of mankind (either psychological man, with emphasis on *hubris*, or religious man, with emphasis on Adam's fall). Can we assuredly assert any of these—or reject any of these? A third question might be about the speaker's moral comment on the king, either his godlike laughter or his disapprobation. Can we assert either? A fourth point would be about the worth of the poem, as a nursery rhyme, as a conceit, as a symbolic edifice, as a comment on man's folly. Which criterion are we going to choose and what evidence are we going to marshal to substantiate our judgment?

These last points, I would suggest, are not amenable to objective testing. There is no right or wrong. That is not to say, however, that in this area anything goes, that beyond a certain point it's all a matter of opinion and that literary study is not a discipline at all. There are some statements about literature that are matters of opinion. "I like it." "I find it moving." "I felt as if I were there." Such statements are finally supportable only by reiteration. Statements as to worth, however, are supportable by the establishing of a criterion and demonstration that this work fulfills that criterion. Statements like the others I have mentioned are supportable by recourse to the text. I find it impossible, for example, to support an analogy between Humpty and Adam, and quite easy to support one between Humpty and a political figure like the Duke of Monmouth.

What sorts of statements are those which can form the basis of objective testing and what sorts cannot? If one uses the elements which I outlined earlier, one sees that statements of engagement are generally of the tautological sort. They can be elaborated, they can use parts of the text to show their origin, but they can be neither proved nor disproved. Statements of evaluation and statements of interpretation are supportable, but they are also subject to modification if one is to change the premises by saying, for instance, that a work is good in its working out of structure, but bad in its failure to treat of a sufficient theme. That leaves statements of perception: these clearly, are empirically verifiable, although not all statements of perception would gain general assent, particularly not statements of tone, mood, or pace. These statements, then, necessarily form the basis of objective testing. They are also a rather small part of the literary or aesthetic experience. Let us add the qualification that good objective questions dealing with interpretation and evaluation are possible, but they measure the ability to reason about a work of literature more than they do a strictly literary skill. They measure the ability to justify conclusions from the evidence given. Let me add, too, that while I have been referring to objective testing, I think I

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can broaden my remarks to include all testing, and say that insofar as one is testing critical skills one can only ask questions about perception and perceptual vocabulary and procedures. All else that one asks questions about—questions like "What does the work mean? "How did the work affect you?" "How is the work like life?" and "Is the work good?"—are questions about the ability to present evidence to support a generalization—and this ability, certainly, is not confined to literature, but is a transferable ability. That is, though the object of the question be a literary work, the question calls for what one might call a general dialectical and rhetorical power, one that is applicable to any set of phenomena. The procedures that we use to establish one interpretation or evaluation of a literary work are the same as those we use to interpret or evaluate any event, historical, political, social, or biological.

Where then is the English teacher? Is he condemned to a life as an exegetical drudge? If he is to consider himself as one who teaches people simply how to be readers of literature, if he sees himself as teaching for a test (a worthy occupation if the end is worthy) and sees that test as only dealing with the empirically verifiable in literature, then he must confine himself to telling students about literary perception. There is quite a lot to do there, as many of you know, for literary perception includes most literary history and scholarship; there is a great deal of background about Humpty Dumpty we could give our students. But, let's face it, restricted this way, the English teacher would soon find himself condemned by school boards to the dreary task of hunting comma faults and of teaching literature only to prospective graduate students in English. Fortunately, there is another side to the coin. The other three categories of the critical procedure are, as I said, dialectical and rhetorical. Their specific focus may be a literary work, but the mental operations involved are transferable. Just as the test of these categories measures a general rather than a specific ability—the ability to reach and support a conclusion of worth, or a conclusion of meaning, or a conclusion of effect and impression—so does teaching in these categories develop a general ability. The teacher of English, when he deals with engagement, interpretation, and evaluation, is educating the student.

Teaching The Literature Of Protest

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Maxine Greene

Let us begin by reminding you of the discontent in our world, of the awareness that penetrates the blandness of the most tradition-bound teacher and the most unimaginative child—the awareness that there is a kind of slippage underfoot, that all is not right in this most affluent of all possible worlds. Somehow, the opening of *Hamlet* springs to mind as I search for a context. I see those soldiers peering from the platform in Elsinore, not knowing what unnerves them so much, made uneasy by the slightest sound, distrustful even of each other's views.

> Bernardo: Who's there?
> Francisco: Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.
> Bernardo: Long live the king!
> Francisco: Bernardo?
> Bernardo: He.

Who else, after all, would it be? But Francisco, at the moment of customary ritual, needs to be twice reassured. And why? "I am sick at heart."

Our students may not be "sick at heart," not conscious of the "bitter cold"; but, like those sentinels in *Hamlet*, they are frequently afflicted by the feeling that the unrest they see "bodes some strange eruption," and they do not know what it means. It is against a background of felt ambiguities and half-heard discord that I wish to examine the problem of teaching "protest literature" today.

I should like to begin by distinguishing our time from such periods as the Thirties, when "protest literature" was far more common and when, even more significantly, the "goods" and "bads" were clearly and sharply defined. Granting the objections of right-wing and patriotteer groups, I believe that the actual teaching problem presented by proletarian and anti-war literature was not particularly acute. Consider John Steinbeck's expression of rebellious identification with the poor and the outraged in novels like *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. Hesitant as some teachers might have been to nurture discontent, there was something undeniable about the suffering and seeking of the disinherited, something unquestionably *good* about those who were exploited or cast down, something *bad* about those who thrust them off the land or out of the factories, or who had worked them until they dropped from exhaustion. And the values which emerged from a reading of *The Grapes of Wrath* were basically "respectable" and deeply traditional. Revolutionary in one sense, the meanings of Tom Joad's great speech at the end were unarguable in another:

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> "Well, maybe," Casy says, "a fella ain't got a soul of his own, but on'y a piece of a big one — and then . . . then it don't matter. Then where — wherever you look, wherever they's a fight so hungry people can eat, I'll be there. If Casy knowed, why, I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad an'—I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're mad an' they know supper's ready. An' when our folks eat the stuff they raise an' live in the houses they build—why, I'll be there. See?"

I think the same might be said about other works of that era—Agee's, Caldwell's, Dos Passos', Farrell's, Gold's[1] and even, when read in that era, Richard Wright's *Native Son*. The quality of the works varied exceedingly, as did the political attachments of the authors; but there was a core of meaning that made the rebellious novels continuous with the great tradition of seeking in America. They were all in some manner touched by the American Dream. I am going to suggest that the works of protest literature now available—and, in fact, the very meaning of "protest" today—have changed dramatically in significance and impact, and that the problems faced by teachers with respect to them are far more complex. It is not only the growing moral relativism which has complicated the issue, the prevalent ambivalence on the matter of commitments, the erosion of fidelity and faith. Nor is it merely the trauma of living in an increasingly depersonalized corporate society, with the accompanying sense of powerlessness and loss. There is, it seems to me, a growing disaffection with respect to what once were taken to be our fundamental norms. Sociologists, like E. H. Erikson, talk of differentiation and the disintegration of core beliefs:

> It may be that today much of Negro Youth, as well as an artistic-humanistic section of White Youth, feel disadvantaged and, therefore, come to develop a certain solidarity in regard to "the crisis" or "the revolution"; for young people in privileged middle-class homes, as well as in underprivileged Negro homes, may miss the sameness and continuity throughout development which make a grandmother's warmth and a fervent aspiration part of an identical world. One may go further and say that this whole segment of American youth is attempting to develop its own ideology and its own rites of confirmation . . . to fill an obvious void in the traditional balance of American life—a void caused by a dearth of that realism, solidarity, and ideology which welds together a functioning radical opposition.[2]

This suggests one of the crucial difficulties faced by educators today, and not English educators alone. Part of our charge, after all, is to induct young people or, more properly, to initiate them into the ways of believing, valuing, and knowing that which we associate with our ongoing way of life. Erikson conceives a "functioning radical opposition" to be essential to the balance which helped give our culture identity. With the balance lost, there exists a void, a discontinuity. When young people begin to develop their own "rites of confirmation," when they declare themselves to be anarchists or nihilists in their efforts to dramatize rejections of the cultural patterns, teachers find themselves confronting something very different from the generational unrest of the past.

Now, I recognize that the majority of young people do not wear beards, carry placards or yellow flowers, go to Mississippi, sit in at administrative offices, or picket the Pentagon. Most of our students quite obviously accede to the demands we make of them and go on to take their allotted places in the routine dance of life. But, it is hard for me to believe

that many of them are wholly unaware of what is happening around them, or wholly untouched by it. Surely, they are sensitive to the outcries from the slums in Watts, Chicago, Rochester, San Francisco, and New York. They hear the sounds of the peace demonstrations and the be-in's; they hear the talk of marijuana and LSD. They certainly understand when we talk about cop-outs and hippies and those who "turn on" in the big city parks, and they have heard about the sexual revolution.

Whether our students are committed to causes they have shaped themselves, or whether they are cool and Mod, or given to acting out by imitating the "great unwashed," their experience is to some degree an experience in restiveness and ambiguity. They know, whether they conceptualize it or not, that we are living "on a darkling plain." But, according to most reports, English teachers do not acknowledge this, at least when it comes to the teaching of literature and the selection of reading lists. They seem to have accommodated to what may be a kind of revolution in awareness as slowly as they have accommodated to the social revolution in the cities of our day. The point is that we have not yet developed curricula, except, perhaps, in the case of our most gifted students, which are sufficiently relevant to the concerns of young people today.

I am sure that one of the first things that came to your minds when you saw the title of this talk was the matter of Negro literature, or, perhaps, the Negro *in* literature. Although it is probably true that the most explicitly protesting literature is being written by Negro writers about their own condition, I think we should be wary of associating Negro literature and protest literature too closely. Also, I think we should be wary of considering Negro literature to be solely a protest literature. I say this for two reasons. One of them has to do with my conception of protest literature today. I have already tried to communicate a sense of the ambivalence and ambiguity in contemporary protest movements and to distinguish what we now might reasonably conceive to be protest literature from the more sharply defined social protest literature of the Thirties. If we subsume Negro literature under a rubric of "protest," we are all too likely to consider it in terms more appropriate to the Thirties than to the Sixties, thus creating new irrelevancies *and* misusing Negro literature. My second reason has to do with this misuse. If we categorize such literature, we become unable to make distinctions between those works which constitute art and those which do not. We end up by reinforcing our stereotypes or creating new ones. "All-White World" or not, the introduction of a shade of color here and there just for the sake of enlivening things and making the picture more acceptable solves nothing—and, from our point of view, may make things worse.

The challenge posed by what we call Negro literature is a challenge to innocence and ignorance. English teachers need to know enough to make distinctions; they need to have the courage required for asserting that a given piece of work, although written by a Negro writer, is simply not a work of art. Also, they need to have the sensitivity required to dis-

cover these works which are potentially relevant in particular classroom contexts and those which are not. Where protest literature is concerned, they need to make a whole range of distinctions and to think hard about what they conceive to be the meaning of "protest" and about what they believe to be the significance of various kinds of protest for various kinds of groups.

Having at least pointed to the need to make distinctions, I find myself wanting to talk about the importance of doing justice to Negro literature in the classroom. My reasons are very close to the reasons I would offer for teaching the literature of protest in general; since they have to do with the vales of confrontation, even painful confrontation, and they have to do with the connection between breaking through stereotypes and what Ralph Ellison calls the "invisibility" affecting others, and the discovery of a reader's true, authentic self.

Let me illustrate by describing three literary works by Negro authors, each of which presents a different problem: Richard Wright's *Native Son;* Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man;* and James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time.* As I tried to suggest earlier, *Native Son*, on one level, may be treated as a proletarian novel, a social protest work. If, in fact, we were considering it at the time it was written, in 1940, I think we might well place our major stress upon its social features: especially, the rendering of the role played by a hostile environment in determining the tragic plight of Bigger Thomas. If this were 1940, we might even find a kind of "lesson" in it for our students, a "message" not too unlike the one certain teachers found in Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*.

I should like to submit that a number of things have changed in a quarter of a century, within and outside of the schools. As I have said, the very landscape of American dissent has been greatly altered; and the kind of revolutionary consciousness which gave rise to *Native Son* belongs in a rather startling way to the far-off past. But, our approach to literature has changed as well. We are far more inclined to deal, when we teach a work of literature, with "the work itself" in complexity and its several levels of meaning. In the case of *Native Son*, therefore, we are inclined to penetrate the surface thematic meanings. Yes, the book presents the tragic history of an isolated, innocent young Negro in Chicago. Yes, it goes beyond his history to communicate something important about the plight of masses of Negro slum-dwellers in a country which has not kept the promise implied by the statement, "Each man is endowed by his creator with certain unalienable rights."

But, there is more, certainly for those willing to enter into the work and probe the many layers of meaning to be found. In the section of the novel dealing with the confrontation between Bigger and his lawyer, Mr. Max, Bigger finds irrelevant the lawyer's radical interpretation of what is happening to him. It seems to mean little that he will be considered a kind of martyr to exploitation and discrimination as Mrs. Max says. Far more important to him in his own assertion of freedom:

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"I didn't want to kill." Bigger shouted. "But what I killed for, I *am*! It must've been down deep in me to make me kill! I must have felt a awful load to murder . . . .

Bigger needs, as he says a moment later, to feel "really alive in this world." And we realize, encountering what he is saying, that it may be the tragedy of contemporary man that the only freedom left to him in the universe is the freedom to destroy, to destroy both others and himself. Whether we *believe* this on a cognitive level or not, whether we take it to be "true" in some empirical sense or not, a perception of this level of meaning may give the novel enormous stature and, I should say, authentic universality.

Is it any longer a protest novel, when regarded in this way? I would say it is, in a far more universal sense than if it were merely considered a proletarian novel. This is because I believe that, especially for young people, the most crucial problems in the contemporary world center around the feeling of powerlessness and the yearning for identity. I am sure I do not have to tell you that I do not think Bigger Thomas is an exemplar, that I do not believe it is a good and healthy thing to murder if there is no other available mode of self-expression. I am simply suggesting that the young person who is able to read *Native Son* with awareness of what it is, and what it does, may experience the kind of confrontation which results in heightened self-awareness. Thrown back upon one's inwerness, one's subjectivity (as the existentialists say), one is in a position to act upon one's freedom—to choose oneself—to *be*. *Native Son*, therefore, may launch protests against non-being, against nothingness. Encounters with it may lead to new commitments in the very midst of life.

Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* may be, in one dimension, an enactment of this unique experience—the experience of moving from feeling oneself to a cypher, a mere object in others' eyes, to affirming oneself as a person, even underground, within oneself. The range of the novel is "both broader and deeper" than the range of *Native Son*. Moving through a great spectrum of experience, it culminates in an ironic affirmation of the person—not as murderer now, but as artist, an artist and more.

> Why should I be dedicated and set aside — yes, if not at least to *tell* a few people about it . . . . The very act of trying to put it all down has confused me and negated some of the anger and some of the bitterness. So it is that now I denounce and defend, or feel prepared to defend. I condemn and affirm, say no and say yes . . . . I denounce because though implicated and partially responsible, I have been hurt to the point of invisibility. And I defend because in spite of all I find that I love. In order to get some of it down I have to love. I sell you no phony forgiveness. I'm a desperate man—but too much of your life will be lost, its meaning lost, unless you approach it as much through love as through hate . . . .

This, to me, is one of the great renderings of protest in our time, and one of the most moving affirmations. The fact that Ellison is Negro and that his narrator is Negro seems important mainly because the condition of the Negro is in so many ways exemplary, and has been recognized to be so by many hundreds of young people. There is a sense in which Ellison

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presents something essential about the human condition, not simply the Negro condition, in his novel; and this, to me, is what makes it protest literature.

Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time* (once entitled "Letter from A Region of My Mind") is an autobiographical essay, which achieves its climax in an outright cry of protest and of threat:

> One is responsible to life. It is the small beacon in that terrifying darkness from which we come and to which we shall return. One must negotiate this passage as nobly as possible, for the sake of those coming after us. But white Americans do not believe in death, and this is why the darkness of my skin so intimidates them. And this is also why the presence of the Negro in this country can bring about its destruction.

This brief work may be taught, of course, as an account of what it is like to be a Negro growing up in Harlem. It may be taught as an account of James Baldwin's own growing up and an explanation of his anger and his disdain. But, it may also be presented as an occasion for defining responsibility and shaping commitment, the very processes in which literature of protest is traditionally realized and fulfilled. Baldwin, offering possibilities of engagement, provides opportunities for defining a cause as well, paradoxically a cause which *is* continuous with the American striving through the years, for all the writer's apparent rejection of the American myth and the American dream.

There are remarkably few contemporary works which offer this much. I have in mind *Letters from Mississippi* by Elizabeth Sutherland, Sally Belfrage's *Freedom Summer*, Martin Luther King's *Why We Can't Wait*, Martin B. Duberman's documentary play, *In White America*. None of them, interestingly enough, are fictional; we shall probably have to wait for the literature of the civil rights revolution. But, I think they ought to be considered in addition to the literature which I have come to call the literature of existential protest. They offer opportunities for identification and the reconstitution of continuities, for what Erik Erikson has called the value of "fidelity," at least for those who are groping for commitment, for a place in history.

I would also like to suggest the possibility of conceiving modern works like Bernard Malamud's *The Fixer*, Saul Bellow's *Dangling Man*, and John Knowles' *A Separate Peace* as protest novels in their own right. *The Fixer*, as you know, has to do, not merely with a dreadful, exemplary persecution, but with a man's journey out "in the open" in search of a species of education, a wider and more meaningful life:

> Once you leave . . . you're out in the open; it rains and snows. It snows history, which means what happens to somebody starts in a web of events outside the personal. It starts, of course, before he gets there. We're all history, that's sure, but some are more than others.

Can we, as teachers, imagine any more significant protest than a protest against the narrow confines of provincialism and ignorance—a willingness to adventure with ideas?

In *Dangling Man*, there is a kindred discovery when Joseph, who has been spending most of his time apart, writing compulsively in a diary, realizes that "goodness is achieved not in a vacuum, but in the company of older men, attended by love." Terrified of being trapped and determined by society, he huddles into himself; but, every time he embarks on a journey outward, he finds himself retreating again. Although the tension is never truly resolved, he does see that "I had not done well alone," and this too makes possible the confrontation of self even by the young reader who is restive and unsure, whose protest has become the protest of copping out. Some of the same things may happen with a teaching of *A Separate Peace* and an encounter with the deadly contest between two boys in the midst of wartime. Who can forget Phineas, who escaped the hostile thing in the world because he "possessed an extra vigor, a heightened confidence in himself, a serene capacity for affection which save him"? And is not this also a kind of protest, a rebellion? ("All of them, all except Phineas, constructed at infinite cost to themselves these Maginot lines against the enemy they thought they saw across the frontier, this enemy who never attacked that way—if he ever attacked at all: if he was indeed the enemy.")

I must leave the accumulation of examples and, I hope, the testing of some of them, to you. I have been trying to say that, in a world like ours, where protest is diffuse and strange, where young people find little to believe in and little to trust, the old simplicities of the social protest novels have become archaic and irrelevant. I see nothing harmful in teaching *Cry, the Beloved Country*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, or any other work of art that seems to you to celebrate the enduring and radiant values which give so much dignity to life. But, I think it is important, sometimes, to recall the prevailing ambivalence of the young, the disregard for laws, absolutes, all the "sentries of the past," the endless, sometimes hopeless quest for identity in a world felt to be increasingly "absurd."

It may turn out that the "anti-hero" works, the drama of the absurd, and the black comedies speak most truly to the young. Our students may be what they themselves sometimes affirm: the generation of *The Stranger*—of Meursault, who could define no values and make no choices until he felt the "dark wind of death." They may discover themselves most acutely by means of encounters with *Catch-22*, *End of the Raod*, *The Zoo Story*, *The Dumbwaiter*, *V*, and *Stern*. You have heard some of your students talk about the film, *Morgan*, and you know the attraction of primitivism, of romantic naturalism, even in the form of mad antics and a return to ancestral slime. You have seen them line up for *Alfie*, *Georgy-Girl*, *Blow-Up*, *The Knack*, and even for *Who's Afriad of Virginia Woolf?* I am simply asking that you keep this in mind as you choose what you think it is important to teach. I am asking that you keep remembering what all of you have always known: that all fine literature becomes a literature of protest if it is taught in such a way that it serves the cause of life.

A Talk to Teachers

Jonathan Kozol

We meet, I'm afraid, at a tragically appropriate moment. The nation is divided between a false facade of superficial mourning for a dead man [Martin Luther King] it seldom genuinely honored and a more authentic and gut-level terror that we are soon going to be obliged to pay a terrible price for the racism and brutality his murder symbolizes.

The over-riding fear, the constant question, is whether or not we are about to have a summer of unending urban riots. To my own mind the most saddening fact of all is that, in the long run, in terms of the ultimate issues, it is not going to much matter. More people may die and another thousand buildings may perhaps be burned or battered but the same problems will be with us even after the wreckage has been cleared away and, riots or not, destruction blatant and overt or destruction only gradual and ordinary, the same bitter problems of a divided society and of a nation torn by bigotry will still be with us in September.

I think that in America we love to believe in apocalyptic interventions. It would be comforting almost to think that a rebellion, no matter how devastating, no matter how expensive, would at least have the ultimate result of settling our problems. It is—unhappily—not so.

Broken glass and streams of blood will be good covers for news magazines in the middle of the summer—but they will not even begin to solve our problems. Probably they will not even destroy us.

They will *scare* us for a while and force our newspapers to write long editorials. And then we will go back to our ordinary American lives again and to our old, more quiet ways of dying.

It is for this reason, I believe, that now is as good a time as any to take an unforgiving second look at some of the ways in which we have defined the basic problems. I would like to focus on the schools. I would like to focus on the teachers. And I would like to get beyond some of the unproductive things that have been said already.

The problem within the ghetto, stated in the very simplest possible terms, comes down to a very few plain and painful facts: Black kids, black parents and black leaders do not—by and large—either like or trust their schools or the kinds of white people who work in them. A great many black people, given even half a chance, would dearly love to burn the whole mess down and—unhappily, in a good many cases—would not be very much the losers if they succeeded.

I say this not facetiously but because I believe that many Negro people have been fortunate enough to recognize fairly early in their lives that the schools were not their friends, that the schools were not going to

stand beside them in a struggle, that the teachers were not likely to stick out their necks on crucial issues.

I am going to try to be as frank as possible in attempting to anticipate the reactions to this statement among many of the people in this audience. Many of you, I can imagine, will protest at this kind of disloyal assertion on my part and will want to stand up and tell me that I am being insolent and speaking out of turn, needlessly defiant and unjustly disrespectful to my fellow-teachers: Don't I know—these people will want to ask—how many of the dedicated teachers of the inner city schools have given their lives to the education of young children?

To this, I am afraid, that there is only one real answer: It does not matter, in the long run, what I *think*—what matters in the long run is what the black communities BELIEVE. And what they *do* believe at the present time, throughout the nation, is that professional teaching hierarchies, principals, superintendents—are servants and acolytes of a hostile, unfriendly and ultimately unmerciful white structure which has trodden them down and kept their souls and lives in prison for over three hundred years and which still today oppresses their children, murders their leaders and disdains their own humanity.

If this is the case—if this is what the black communities believe—then the challenge for us is *not* to withdraw into a militant and stiff defensive posture in which we ward off criticism with our pious platitudes of "professional experience" and "long years of dedication" but to ask ourselves instead just exactly why it is that all our "professionalism" and all our inheritance of reiterated "dedication" seem to have had the ultimate effect of compelling most black people to despise us?

The deepest, most direct and most immediate personal experience that a black child in America is ever likely to have of white society is that which he will have within a public classroom—in the person of the school teacher. That experience, as we well know, is anything but happy. Bitterness and cynicism are the primary inheritance that most black children in America take from the classroom.

"Hate whitey!" cries the 14-year-old Negro student standing on the corner.

"Hate whitey!" repeats the 16-year-old drop-out as he sees a white policeman cruising through the ghetto.

But who is this whitey?? What white people do they *know?* What white man or white woman have they ever faced directly, known with intimacy, had a chance to assess and study and evaluate and learn how to trust or distrust—hate or admire?

Well, you know the answer as readily as I do: sometimes it's a slumlord, a grocer, a money-lender, police officer or social worker—but in almost *all* cases it is a white school principal or a white school teacher.

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And it is from us, whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not, whether we can admit it or not, that black kids sooner or later get the message that white men and white women are people who—for one reason or another—they cannot take for real. Some teachers keep on repeating the same question, as though they haven't an idea in the world of a possible answer: Why don't they trust us? What on earth could we be doing wrong?

I don't think we really have to look far to find the answer. Teachers go out on strike for all sorts of good and palpable and powerful reasons: they strike for pay, they strike for better working conditions, they strike for extra benefits, occasionally they even strike for issues which have something to do, specifically, with the immediate demands of education: but *when*, the black community asks us, *did we ever strike to bring about racial integration? When*—they ask—*did the junior high school teachers of the ghetto ever strike to have the dishonest and openly bigoted and destructive Allyn and Bacon social studies textbooks taken out of their shelves and classrooms?*

You called us *culturally deprived*—the black parents tell us—you told us that we were the ones who lacked stability and values. All the while you, as the teacher, remained the keeper of the classroom and the guardian of its books and values. You were the ones who could examine those texts and prepare the lessons, ready the lesson-plans, state your approach, your purpose, your methods, and your evaluations. Yet all the while you failed for some reason to make the one most important and most obvious and necessary evaluation of them all: Are these books, are these values, are these areas of evasion and dishonesty consistent with democratic principles and with all that you (the teacher) are supposed to have known about the "professionalism" and "moral dignity" of education?

Allyn and Bacon, publishers: *Our America,*—a textbook for fourth grade children on our nation's history:

> 'Our slaves have good homes and plenty to eat.' . . . Most Southern people treated their slaves kindly. . . . 'When they are sick, we take good care of them.' No one can truly say, 'The North was right' or 'The Southern cause was the better.' For in Our America all of us have the right to our beliefs.

You were there—you were in the classroom—you were the one who had the education and the professional judgement and, supposedly, the moral character: *What did you do—what did you say?* (the Negro mother asks us) *If you ever protested, you must have done it in a whisper: we never heard you*. . . American Book Company, Publishers: *Our Neighbors Near and Far:*

> The streets of this Oasis city of Biskra [in North Africa] are interesting. There are many different people upon them. Some who are white like ourselves have come here from Europe. Others are Negroes with black skins, from other parts of Africa. And many are bronze-faced Arabs who have come in from the desert to trade in the stores. . .

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These people are fine looking. Their black eyes are bright and intelligent. Their features are much like our own, and although their skin is brown, they belong to the white race, as we do. It is the scorching desert sun that has tanned the skin of the Arabs to such a dark brown color.

Yumbu and Minko are a black boy and a black girl who live in this jungle village. Their skins are of so dark a brown color that they look almost black. Their noses are large and flat. Their lips are thick. Their eyes are black and shining, and their hair is so curly that it seems like wool. They are Negroes and they belong to the black race.

Two Swiss children live in a farmhouse on the edge of town. . . . These children are handsome. Their eyes are blue. Their hair is golden yellow. Their white skins are clear, and their cheeks are as red as ripe, red apples.

You were there—you were in the classroom—what did you say? What did you do? We were the uneducated—(the Negro mother, the Negro father tells us)—we were your maids and ironing-ladies, garbagemen and janitors. We were the ones who were illiterate, we were the ones who were culturally deprived. Daniel Moynihan has told the whole world what was wrong with *us*—but who has yet been able to explain to the world what in God's earth could have been wrong with *you?*

Allyn and Bacon, Publishers, *Our World Today*, another geography textbook, this one for junior high school:

The people of South Africa have one of the most democratic governments now in existence in any country.

Africa needs more capitalists. . . White managers are needed. . . to show the Negroes how to work and to manage the plantations. . .

The white men who have entered Africa are teaching the natives how to live.

You were there—you were the guardian of our children—what did you do?

And this (these things) the Negro child remembers—and the child who read that book five years ago, of course—is the full-grown black teenager of today, and he wants to know what you were doing or saying on these matters: He wants to know why you were silent, when you were the one who was the adult, the grown-up—the professional in that public classroom. You kept the cupboard. You prepared the meal. And what you fed the child—without remorse—was poison. Whether you taught math or physics, Russian, Chinese, English, French or cooking—you were there. You were an adult and you said nothing. There is no way in which you can escape responsibility.

The Negro mother and the Negro father speak to you, quietly: You went on strike (they say)—you went out on strike for your "professional rights and dignities" but you never once went out on strike for your rights *or* our rights as respectable human beings.

"Why is it they don't trust us?" ask the sweet and bewildered white school-ladies to each other.

Because we're frauds and it took the Negroes a long time to figure it out: but now they know it.

A couple of years back a highly respected board of inquiry sponsored by the Massachusetts State Board of Education issued a report

documenting the fact of racial segregation in the Boston Schools. The report was signed by outstanding figures in all areas: the Catholic Archbishop, leaders of the Jewish and Protestant communities, the presidents of Boston University, M.I.T., Brandeis and Northeastern. . . .

In response to this report, a young Boston teacher, assigned to a third grade class within the ghetto, initiated a brief letter simply asserting in an unbelligerent manner that she, and other school teachers, were aware of the presence of racial segregation in their classroom, were aware of the deficiencies of their school buildings, and shared the sense of impatience and of discontent evinced both by the State Report and by the Black Community. She—like others—had heard the children singing when they were walking on the picket lines and she knew very well the words of one of the songs they sang:

"Which side are you on?" the song was asking, "Which side are you on?" It came out of the labor union struggles of the 1930's and was taken over by the white and Negro people in the Freedom Movement.

So here was this young white girl in the school system trying, with a good heart, to give an answer and she appealed to her fellow-teachers in the system to do the same.

Ladies and gentlemen—there were at least 4,000 professional employees of the Boston Public Schools at that time. *Not 20 people would stand beside that one young teacher by affixing their signatures at the bottom of her letter.*

"Which side are you on?" the black parents were demanding.

And 3,980 professional employees of the Boston School System gave their answer. Then. . . in their faculty rooms, over their sandwiches and over their cups of coffee, the dedicated white ladies sat and stared at each other in sweet bewilderment—asking the time-honored question: "Why is it they don't trust us?"

Because they had done nothing to *deserve* being trusted: because they were not *trustworthy*.

The distance and the withdrawal on the part of a school faculty from its immediate community is, I think, well-known to many of us. Those among us who are acquainted with the classic faculty-room dialogue within a ghetto grade-school or a junior-high know well, I think, how older teachers coach the younger ones about the ways in which to deal and talk with Negro people: *Be careful*, is the message: *Don't be unguarded or informal. Don't let yourself be known to the black community in any way that might be vulnerable, that might reveal your feelings.*

The first advice that I received from my school supervisor was not to make use of the informal and casual word OKAY.

"I noticed you used the word OKAY three times this morning, Mr. Kozol"—said my superior. "OKAY is a slang word, Mr. Kozol. In the Boston schools we say ALL RIGHT, we do not say OKAY."

It seemed not worth the pain, not worth the trouble to reason with the man—to try to tell him that OKAY could be a very good and powerful word, that ALL RIGHT says nothing, that OKAY says everything, that President Kennedy used to say the word OKAY to his brothers, that good reporters say OKAY to their editors, football captains to their managers, pilots to the airport. I wanted to tell him that OKAY was a good word, an American word, an OKAY word—a word with life in it, and energy. But I didn't even argue with him. I just looked at him and nodded—and denied myself and said quietly, "All right."

There was the time, too, when I took a child over to visit in Cambridge. We visited the museums, went to call on an old classmate, had lunch with my girl friend, and went back to my own place to set up an electric train lay-out in the kitchen. The principal of my school heard of this visit in short order and later wrote of it in her report on me. She indicated in her report that unattractive conclusions might well be drawn of a man who takes a young child to visit in his home. Said the principal in her report, "I told Mr. Kozol of the possibilities. . ."

I think, also, of the tragedy of a PTA meeting in my building at which I arrived a little late—late enough to stand a moment in the doorway and look out at the extraordinary scene in front of me. Parents on one side—teachers way over on the other. In the middle—a huge safe space of unoccupied and untouched chairs.

I looked and watched and wondered:
How did this happen?
Was it conceivably a random accident?
Was it just a fluke of timing?

Obviously—with all mercy, all reservation, all wish to be wise and kindly and compassionate and back-bending—one could not CONCEIVABLY write off the professional STUPIDITY, VULGARITY and sheer ROTTENNESS of the school principal and faculty in allowing this kind of situation to develop.

Was it not, I had to ask myself, part and parcel of the same stupidity that prevented white teachers from dropping in on Negro families, from driving kids home, from fooling around in a comfortable and easy-going way out in the schoolyard? Was it not the same tragedy, the same ignorance, the same brutality which allowed a school faculty to drive through the ghetto every morning with eyes looking neither to left nor to right, nor, in some cases, one felt, even down the middle? Teachers on one side—parents on the other. In the center, an area of graphic sterilization. No germs might travel, no blackness, no ugliness, no race-contagion, could journey the distance from the seated mothers of a black community and the prissy teachers, their legs and souls up-tight together in their safe and sexless little corner on the aisle.

I would like to be able to deserve to be called generous by my fellow-teachers and I recognize all too well that, in ringing such a note of outright indignation, I bring upon myself once again, as I have done before, the concerted rage of a profession of embattled people, teachers in panic, principals in frenzy, aroused to vengeance at the implications of their personal cowardice, deceitfulness and pathos.

Yet it is true. It is there before us every day. And the very rare exceptions only stand out to prove the rule.

Avoidance of intimacy—avoidance of blackness—avoidance of humanity. At times, the tragedy involved in such a stance withdrew into the background and all that remained was a kind of wild absurdity.

Absurdity seemed uppermost in a confrontation that developed once between our principal and one of the other Fourth Grade teachers. The teacher in question, a woman, happened to be Negro and happened to live in Roxbury and happened, as a matter of fact, to live in the precise neighborhood in which the school was situated. The principal had advised us to observe unusual caution in regard to any casual or day-to-day involvements with the black community. She did not, of course, use those words, but it was apparent to us all that this was her real meaning. So this teacher, the Negro woman I have just mentioned, went up and asked the principal what she expected of her.

"What if I'm in the supermarket," she asked, "and I meet the mother or father of one of my pupils there? What do you think I'm going to say?"

The principal was taken aback, obviously baffled by the situation. It did not accord properly with a reasonable understanding of such matters that a person ought to be living within the same community in which she also was a teacher. Our principal, however, was good at regaining her composure—she never lost it for long, nor lacked of authoritative resources for regaining it. And so in this case too she soon regained her self-possession, looked directly into the eyes of this young teacher, and said to her simply:

"Well then, in such a case all I can do is to advise you not to forget your professional dignity."

It is hard to know exactly how she meant this, or how indeed one is to lose dignity in the purchasing of groceries except by confirming to the mothers and fathers of a community that you, like them, possess an alimentary canal, need food, spend money, buy things cheaply. It is hard to know—but I don't even want to ask. What I would like to do instead is to ask what we can do for our part to change these things and to break down these walls of inhumanity.

I think, to start with, we have got to ask ourselves straightforwardly where most of these teachers and administrators *come* from—and in what ways they have been prepared for teaching. This, of course, is the

real question and I am afraid—no matter what we say—the majority of us already know the answer.

They come from schools of education.
They come from teachers' colleges.

They do *not*, by and large, come from the liberal faculties of our major universities, but from those faculties which are geared to teacher-training.

I think it is time to place some of the blame where it belongs and to cease trying to placate those who are most likely to take offense at words of frankness.

Some schools of education (a few) are relatively competent and provide a rich and humane education. (For the sake of politeness, let us assume that the education faculty from which any of my listeners may have graduated was one of the exceptions.) By and large, this is simply not the case. Education schools, in their great numbers, are institutions which perpetuate precisely the kinds of uneasy and defensive behavior which I have been describing. At times they offer, I suppose, certain courses which may be truly helpful in a very few and highly selective areas of learning. Much of what they teach, however, is *not* necessary at all, has little relevance to the human or intellectual or moral demands to be placed upon a classroom teacher, and leaves her worse off than she was before she started.

In every other field we are willing to acknowledge the failure of a process of preparation when the products of that preparation prove unequal to the responsibilities for which they had thought that they had been prepared. *Only in education, it appears, do we attribute the blame for failure not to the training institution, not to the Education School nor even to the teacher—but to the consumer, the victim, the public, the Negro family and the Negro child.* Teachers, filled full with all the newest codification—with all the most recent and most sophisticated formulas of condescension concerning the supposedly under-motivated, lethargic and culturally disadvantaged Negro child—go out into the ghetto, memorize the words of their sociologists and suddenly find themselves bewildered and helpless, over-whelmed by the realities which are imposed upon them. Sometime—seeing the bewilderment with which so many education school graduates respond—I wonder if they would not have been better off in the beginning if they had had their courses, their training, their preparation right on the spot, right in the ghetto all along? What did they gain from all their courses in the philosophy of education, in methods and materials, in sociological examination of so-called "culturally deprived" but a wearisome and inappropriate and somehow dehumanizing sense of condescension—and an inflated and artificial image of their own individual importance as "professionals"?

Teachers tell us very frequently of the hostilities they encounter, the disappointments they face, the distrust their presence repeatedly engenders in their Negro pupils.

There was no such distrust of teachers in the Freedom Schools of Alabama and Mississippi.

There is no such distrust of teachers in the tutorial classes run by the various militant Negro community organizations in this country.

There is no such distrust in the classrooms of those experimental grade-schools begun and operated by the black communities.

Nor, I think we remember, has there ever been distrust of that sort within the Headstart Classes, Upward Bound Programs, or other independent educational projects of the War On Poverty.

Yet none of these programs that I have named are dominated by those whom we designate "professionals." It is, indeed, one is almost tempted to believe, the adamant *non*-professionalism—the amateur exuberance and uninhibited sense of personal commitment—which makes such programs possible and successful.

Why can we not bring some of the same energy and exuberance into the public classrooms? Is there no way to bring into these classrooms right away the kinds of people who will be able to earn the confidence of a black community because they will in fact share its aspirations? There are thousands of young, bright, brave and revolutionary pupils in the liberal colleges of this country and I know from my experience—from recent weeks and hours of long discussion among the parents and leaders of the black communities—that they are still needed and still *wanted* within the schools that serve the inner cities.

For all the recent militance, for all the rhetoric of separation, for all the talk about black schools with all-black children and black teachers, the authentic leaders of the black community will still tell us frankly that they cannot go it alone without white teachers. For a long while to come, the situation is going to remain the same—and the only question is whether we are going to give those children the worst or the best—the dreariest or the most exciting—the narrowest or the freest—that we have to offer.

The liberal and radical kids are there in our colleges right now. We send them to the Peace Corps, we give them to SNCC and S.D.S. or else we let them out on loan to Senator McCarthy but—poor economists that we are—we do not allow them to give their lives to the black children of the inner cities. Not, that is, unless they have previously agreed to have their brain picked dry and their outlook rendered sterile within the thankless surgery of one of our schools of education.

It is a reasonable question, I suppose, whether such kids would stick it out forever in a public classroom. Would they remain in teaching?

Would they last for ten years? Would they last for forty? Would they be "dedicated" forever to their "professional" responsibility and obligation? In a curious sense, I almost hope that they would *not*—not, at any rate, in the manner in which those words have been interpreted up to now.

Rather an impulsive and energetic and unpredictable amateur than a drearily predictable, dedicated and dehydrated professional—and rather a person dedicated to life, and love, and danger, and activity, and action than to the wearisome and unchangeable sterility of chalk and stick and basic reader.

Recently in Newton a parent complained to a School official at an open meeting: "There is so much teacher-turnover within this system. Many of our teachers seem to leave so soon, after only three or four years in many cases, sometimes after seven."

Said the School official: "Of this we are not in the least ashamed. We would rather have teachers we can't keep than teachers we can't get rid of."

There, I believe, in few words, is a very good and adequate answer.

I see no shame in having high teacher-turnover—if what we are turning over is something fertile and exciting. Rather have a lively, attractive and exciting girl who will quit after five years because she has the healthy urge to marry—than a girl who will never quit, for that reason because she will never get an offer.

Many older people, I can well imagine, might consider the kind of proposal I have made impractical. They will tell me that young people, by and large, are selfish and ambitious to settle down, raise families, buy their ranch homes in the country, hire maids, have holidays abroad, earn lots of money. Young people, they say, may *talk* idealism but they will not act upon it. They will not make the sacrifice to stand up and serve as teachers.

When people tell me this—I always look at them for a moment—to think about their motives—and then I say that I do not know the kinds of young people they are speaking of. It was not the selfish and self-centered spoiled daughter of the selfish and the opulent rich man who ran the Freedom Schools in Mississippi and Alabama, who worked with the poor and the hungry for the Peace Corps in Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil. It was not the young man dreaming about a ranch-house and a million dollars who gave up his studies and his comfort and his security to go down South and risk his life, his respectability or his career, to walk a Negro citizen to the City Hall and give him the courage to go in and demand the right to register to vote.

Michael Schwerner was not thinking about cocktails, about sports cars or ranch-wagons when he lay down his life three years ago in Mississippi to help to make this nation free.

James Chaney was not calculating how he could make it to the top when he was buried at the bottom of the mud beneath a wall made out of stone in Mississippi, because he believed that black people still had the privilege to be free.

The young Unitarian minister, James Reeb, murdered three years ago in Selma, Alabama was not worrying about nailing down a fancy parish, sending his kids to fancy schools and buying his wife a fancy way of living when he walked out upon the streets of that racist city and received a club over his head; and fell; and died.

There is a new nation within the old one in America. It is better than the old one; it is honest and it is not selfish and it is not afraid. The oldtime teachers, the oldtime autocrats, the oldtime political school administrators do not really want to believe that this can be the case. It is too threatening. It hurts them very badly. They are involved with guilt and with the memory of cowardice and with the fear of an unspeakable retribution. They knew about the racist books within their shelves and did not speak. They saw the Negro parents across the room and did not smile. They heard the moral challenge—the plea—coming out from within the black community and they did not answer. And now they are unwilling—they are unable—to believe that we can be more decent.

It is up to us to prove that they are wrong.

400,000 Negro kids are going to be attaining the age of eighteen this season. Of those 400,000, not 10% will have received an education equal to the white standards.

It will not be due to their mothers and their fathers.
It will not be due to a defective family-structure.
It will not be due to an inherent lack of intelligence or motivation.

It will be due to ineffective and irrelevant and dishonest EDUCATION.

There is no way to get around it. The facts are there and they are devastating.

We are going to have to look those facts straight in the face and take them seriously. The sweet white lady in the classroom who wears blinders, cannot make her way through to a rebellious generation of black children. The white bigot or false liberal who teaches his lesson, locks up his room, and hops into his car to return to his nice home within the safe suburbs, cannot and should not have a serious role within a ghetto classroom. There is only one kind of person who can make it work—and that is the person who, in his class and in his life, is ready to take a militant stand beside the black community. There is no other way to do it.

Often now, when I have finished with a lecture of this sort, young people come up to me, teachers just beginning or people who believe

that they would like to teach, and they question me, and they ask me, it seems—almost as if it were an amazing and undecipherable riddle: "How is it, Mr. Kozol, that you were able to go in, as you did, to an angry and revolutionary Negro area and into a turbulent and unhappy and properly embittered classroom, a room in which kids had had substitutes half the winter, or emotionally unstable teachers, or teachers who despised them, or—more frequently—teachers who simply didn't really ever care—and did not right on the spot receive a knife in the side or, at the very least, an eraser or an elastic or a paperclip or a spitball in the eye?"

When this question is asked, I often am aware that the questioner expects a complicated answer—a subtle and elaborate and self-complimenting explanation of how I worked out and contrived some amazing and fascinating English lessons guaranteed to hook the most apathetic and lethargic students. It just is not so. There is a far more simple-minded answer. "Listen," I say; "I walked into a ghetto classroom, an inept amateur, knowing nothing. In my lapel there was a tiny little button that the children in that classroom recognized. It was white and black—an equal sign—you remember it, I hope—it was the symbol of the Civil Rights Movement in America. The children had *eyes and they could see*—and they had hearts and minds and they could feel and know. And they knew what that little button stood for. On Saturdays sometimes they saw me on a picket line in front of a dilapidated building whose absentee white landlord had been negligent. On Fridays sometimes, a little while before supper, they would see me and my girlfriend coming up the stairs of their own home to visit with their mother and their father and sometimes stay for dinner.

If it was revolutionary you may say, with a smile, it certainly was the most natural and easy and deeply satisfying kind of a revolution that a man or a woman could conspire.

Then—on Monday—I was in the classroom; and the kids would say "We saw you Saturday." Or another child would say, "He's got a pretty girlfriend." Or another one would say, "He's got a junky old beat-up raggedy car."

But the thing is—they were not angry any longer. And I wasn't a very excellent or fancy teacher—I can assure you—but I was someone they'd seen out in the real world and someone they were willing to take on as a real friend.

Well, there aren't many picket-lines any longer in America, and they don't sing Freedom Songs in this country any more, but the kids out in the ghettos are still turning to us in the same way and asking us the same question that they asked before.

"Which side are you on?" is what they're saying.

And, truly, there is no way to get around that question.

It hurts sometimes. It hurts terribly, I know. But each and every one of us has got to come up with his own answer.

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The Education Game

Arthur Daigon

Several months ago, I was approached by one of the officers of the New York State Committee of English Educators and asked to address this meeting. "What do you want me to talk about?" said I in all innocence. "Well, er, -a- ..." he began. "How about 'The Rise and Fall of Humanities'?" I offered, filling in the hesitations produced by what seemed to be a rather serious speech impediment. "Well, er-a, you see...." "What about 'Issue-Centered, Activity-Based, Cross-Media Programs to the Rescue'?" "No-er-a-you don't understand...." I made what I thought was an offer that no English Educator worthy of his *Media and Methods* subscription could possibly turn down. "How about 'The Sensuous Curriculum'?" I asked (with some feeling). Still the fellow hesitated, and my repertoire of titles was just about exhausted, as was my patience. "Well, what *do* you want?" said I hoping I would not have to pin him to the wall with something as obvious as "Performance Based Teacher Education". That would be grossly unfair, only to be used if all else failed. After a flurry of apologetic pitches, stresses, and junctures, accompanied by anxious glances fore and aft—during which time I began to suspect I was trafficking with either a madman or some purveyor of X-rated curriculum materials—he revealed all. "You know, we *are* a teacher education group, and the making of English teachers, not of curriculum, is what we are about."

That explained it. The message was clear. It said that English teacher education was not the most interesting of subjects, and it would be my job somehow to liven up that part of the education game that seems, sooner or later, to depress or to bore almost all of the players.

Now it is true that conventional English teacher preparation can be a frustrating exercise for those who teach the methods course and supervise the clinical experience of the English teaching novice. Certainly there are good reasons for the high incidence of ticks, stammers, and other assorted symptoms of nervous anxiety some enterprising doctoral student is sure to discover in a randomly selected sample of the English educator population. Consider all of the special interests and circumstances operating on typical English teacher production lines that seem to conspire against the sanity of the conscientious English educator.

Incidentally, from here on, I will use the masculine pronoun when referring to the English educator, because men seem to be in the majority, and the feminine pronoun for the prospective English teacher because some seventy percent are women. We really do need a singular pronoun that will represent both sexes.

In any case, the English educator is hard pressed from many directions—four at least. In the college or university where he works, his academic colleagues view him, at worst, with cold contempt as the exemplar of Mickey Mouse,—cook-book philistinism; at best with bemused sympathy as the quixotic hustler of fantasies suggesting that English is something more than Beowulf to Virginia Woolf and that learning is best accomplished by ways other than talk, test, and term paper. Interesting notions—but they'll never sell.

His students come to him, reluctantly for the most part, to fulfill the methods course requirement for certification. The prospective English teacher probably wanted to go to graduate school and do her thesis on "The Alienated Adolescent in Contemporary American Literature," but was discouraged by the graduate school and her liberal arts professors because her undergraduate grades were not high enough for the heady eyries of graduate scholarship.

These same professors have already warned their outstanding students away from education, assuring them that they will best be fulfilled in the stacks surrounded by *PMLA* and *The Philological Quarterly*. The teaching candidate resents having to confront the alienated adolescent in the flesh rather than reading about him in the quiet, safe study halls of a college campus. Furthermore, she has fallen in love with literature—more accurately with the *idea* of literature—and how can working with apathetic or openly hostile students compete with listening to professional insights about The Tragic Hero, The Whiteness of The Whale, and The American Dream? It is in these college English classes and from the respected professors of English that methods of teaching and the role of the English teacher are really learned. As she fills notebook after notebook with other people's evocations and insights about literature and life, she begins to see herself as a kind of junior professor in the high school classroom she will soon call her own—offering profundities, suggesting influences, and elucidating imagery in the same manner as her English professor. And she sees her high school charges listening, just as she did, with the same rapt attention, carefully noting each literary insight and bon mot. No wonder she is skeptical of the English educator's nagging that telling isn't teaching, that prestigious titles are not necessarily appropriate for most high school students, and that literature is only one component of the reasonable high school program.

After his colleagues and his students, the third source of frustration for the English educator is the secondary school. The moment he enters the front door to make his weekly (or is it bi-weekly) visit to the student teacher the miracle of modern communication relays the news of the invasion. The miracle of modern communication is, of course, a conspiracy of receptionists, switchboard operators, and members of the track team masquerading as student messengers. It becomes apparent to the English educator early in his career that, paranoia aside, he is viewed as an inteloper—the supervision of student teachers only an ingenious

deception enabling him to judge programs, evaluate teachers, pry into book lists, and generally to document the inadequacy of what is happening in the English department. Behind the smiles and correct politeness of the department chairman and the cooperating teacher is their hope that the visit will soon be over and that the professor will return to the ivory tower and leave the training of English teachers to those who are on the battle field facing the daily onslaught. Later I hope to convince you that they are essentially right in their brutal analysis, and that their views can be the basis of salvaging English teacher preparation programs.

The student teacher, meanwhile, is displaying the unmistakable symptoms of galloping schizophrenia. She knows by this time her cooperating teacher thinks the university supervisor is a hopeless romantic who spins utopian fantasies in a college classroom. She also knows that the university supervisor thinks the cooperating teacher is an inept, unimaginative cynic who really hates kids. By the third or fourth week of work in the high school, the emotional allegiance of the novice rests firmly with her cooperating teacher with whom she is intimately associated during the entire trauma of student teaching. She does, however, want to get a good grade (the university supervisor decides that). She also wants good recommendations for her personal folder. (She'll need one from the supervisor and one from her cooperating teacher.)

Her plan is simple but effective, because it provides each of the antagonists with what each wants to hear. To the cooperating teacher she complains (in confidence) about the utopian suggestions of the supervisor—absolutely unworkable in real classrooms with real kids. To the university supervisor she laments (in confidence) the staid and inflexible English teaching view of the cooperating teacher and the absence of any encouragement or opportunity to try some of those exciting things talked about in the methods class. "I came in just at the beginning of Julius Caesar, and I'll have to cover that and a grammar unit. There just won't be any time to make a movie, or slide-poetry show, or to do the unit on semantics." If joint meetings should somehow materialize, she plays a strictly non-directive role and lets supervisor and teacher work things out in the by now ritualized conflict between status and territorial privilege. In any case, when he finally does leave the school the university supervisor is usually a bit sadder and a bit wiser with this added evidence of the network of cross purposes and conflicting roles that is English teacher preparation.

The fourth source of mental upset and depression for the English educator comes from his suspicions and doubts about *his* role in the making of English teachers. He suspects that his weekly visits to hostile territory to look in on a student, not knowing where she has been and where she will be going with her lesson, to offer a bit of advice here and suggestion there is, in view of the need, an exercise in futility. Somehow all of those hours on the road, all of the planning and scheduling that go

into the school visitation machinery don't seem to produce nearly the results that would make it all worthwhile. It is as if he has been choreographed into an elaborate traditional dance with rigidly prescribed movements and highly formalized conventions, a dance that must be performed for long forgotten reasons.

The cruelest cut of all is the realization that even the methods course that he teaches in the college just before the student teaching session, is—for the most part—another exercise in futility—whether it is done in small or large groups, with TV equipment, inductively, or in role-playing scenarios involving make-believe teachers instructing make-believe classes with make-believe lesson plans.

The reason for the failure in the methods classroom is the same reason teachers fail in the English classroom—for it is clear that the problems we face with our young prospective teachers in our methods classroom closely parallel the problems English teachers face with their students in the English classroom. Our problem with our students in the methods class is to change attitudes and behaviors about the teaching of English. The way we attack the problem we call teacher education. The teachers' problem with students in the high school is to change their communicative attitudes and behaviors. The way we attack that problem we call the English curriculum.

The question is "How do we change our methods students, so that they will be able to change their students?—or, if you prefer, what are appropriate experiences for prospective English teachers that will enable them to arrange appropriate English experiences for adolescents?" It is at this point that curriculum and teacher education come together for only as you have a coherent view of the one will you be able to perform consistently in the other.

For the most part, what we did in response to the upheavals in the world of English in the late sixties was to be innovative in our schemes for curriculum reforms in the high schools and to fit these reforms into the conventional methods class-student teaching format. That is, instead of telling about transformational grammar and suprasegmental phonemes, we talk about social dialect and language situations; instead of mock teaching occasions calling for close analysis of a poem, we conduct mock classes analyzing rock lyrics; instead of making study guides for Tom Jones, we make study guides for Le Roi Jones; instead of looking at the short story, we look at the short film. Instead of calling for final projects on "courage," "Who Am I?" and "Alienation" with suggested novels, poems, and short stories, we assign projects on "The Drug Scene," "The Occult," and "Bucking the System" with suggested rock lyrics, editorials, film, photos, and collage.

And these materials and activities *should* be the grist of the high school English program. The nagging question remains whether the old pattern of *learning about* in the methods class and *trying out* in stu-

dent teaching is the best way of equipping teachers to do these things. The old teacher education bottles into which we have poured new curricular wine is bound to change the taste of the wine, perhaps even spoil it completely. Why not take advantage of this time of the throwaway bottle and throw this one away? No need to worry. It won't be missed, and the pollution potential of figurative bottles is relatively low.

Now, I had intended to spend the remaining time talking about what I thought were some promising developments in teacher education — the movement into the schools, the change in the roles of methods instructor, supervisor, English department chairman and English teacher. In addition I was going to say something about tying in-service education to the pre-service program — and how all of this harmonized with the new English curriculum with its emphasis on "field" experiences and solving problems through direct and active involvement. I wanted to describe how all of this is put to work in the English teacher preparation program at The University of Connecticut and in some of the variant programs in other institutions — and I will.

But I find that try as I might I cannot avoid some passing reference to a subject that has roused the passions of professional educators across the country. Our professional publications and meetings reverberate from the blasts leveled first by one side then by the other. The subject, of course, is performance based teacher education, and I am ashamed to say that although I have strong feelings about it, they are mixed feelings. I am not sure where I stand on the issue — at times feeling yes, anything is better than what we have, and other times feeling that what we have might be perfection compared to what is coming. After a definition or two, let me share some of my indecision and some of the inner argument and counter-argument. Who knows, maybe the behavioral objective of completing this paper will effect some kind of resolution, and by the end of it, the burden of indecision will have been lifted.

The Committee on Performance Based Teacher Education of the AACTE says "In performance-based programs, performance goals are specified and agreed to in rigorous detail in advance of instruction. The student preparing to become a teacher must either be able to demonstrate his ability to promote desirable learning or exhibit behaviors known to promote it." Such programs are generally field-centered and a consortium of college/university faculty, students, and public school personnel determines which are the desirable performance criteria and who has met them and who has not. Course requirements, degrees, and time invested mean nothing. The only determinants of certification are successful performance of predetermined behaviors which reflect evidence of "student's knowledge relevant to planning for, analyzing, interpreting, or evaluating situations or behaviors." Draft #2 of "The Master Plan for Higher Education" in the State of New York goes much further saying, "Pupil performance should be a basis for judging teacher

competence." Much is made in the Master Plan of developing teacher competencies rather than merely putting in time in semester hours without systematic evaluation of clearly defined performance objectives.

It is an attractive idea. We can finally do away with the cumbersome and clanking machinery of certification requirements—the courses in educational psychology that affect no one's educational psychology and the crumbling foundation courses that discourage the bright students from continuing in education, the methods courses removed from classrooms, the antagonisms between school, college, and community about teacher training, the talk, talk, talk that is the substitute for doing, the knowing about rather than knowing how. . . . All of this would be swept out by the behavioral broom and the performance pickup.

Aren't all enlightened educators concerned about impact on the learner? Aren't all enlightened English educators concerned with whether the poem, the film, the discussion, the drill or whatever has happened in the classroom has added some shred of an idea or insight or understanding or skill that wasn't there before—and don't we want evidence of it? We demand that our methods students plan a variety of activities that will involve high schoolers in significant issues and problems so that there will be some carry-over in the way they perceive themselves and the world, and in their ability to communicate their perceptions. Yes, the name of the game is students' response and performance, and it would seem that performance-based certification for teachers and behavioral objectives for students address what is important to learning: outcomes, performance, behavior, rather than verbiage, semester hours, and a system of tasks and obstacles unrelated to the real demands of the teaching task or subject.

But wait. There are other arguments which suggest that very little good and possibly much evil will come from the behavioral movement. Let's explore some of their implications for the classroom.

Deciding what are the competencies of English teachers will be difficult enough. Deciding who is demonstrating these competencies and who isn't will be no fair task to assign any group of human beings — the laymen, teachers, students, and professional educators likely to be given the responsibility for passing or failing teacher candidates.

It seems gratuitous to use a consortium of fallible human beings to judge teacher competency and performance. Each has his own vested interest, often running contrary to what is good for young people. Each is susceptible to what Francis Bacon called the idol of the cave, where one's local situation and socio-political interests obscures the reality. The fair way, the *systems* way, the *only* way to eliminate the subjective, and the impressionistic is—you've guessed it—use a *computer* to make judgments of teacher competence!

Can't you see it—the logical extension of objective evaluation of performance. Here's the way it would work.

As the bell rings for the class period to begin, a cleverly hidden console of computer-connected devices is activated. The computer has earlier been fed the mean I.Q. of the class, its past academic performance, and the number and variety of discipline problems reported. By multiple regression it has adjusted the anticipated performance range of the class. A timer records the lapse between the sounding of the bell and the teacher's voice. (Average mean time should range between 0 and 10 seconds). Good classes, of course, are expected to respond more quickly than problem groups. Humanistically inclined administrators would certainly suggest to the teacher that there *are* other ways of starting a period, but until the technology to detect them is developed, it would be best to do it the conventional way, you know, just to keep the machine happy. Meanwhile, as the class is getting started, the room temperature and lighting intensity are quickly gauged by heat and light sensors, and depending on the time of day and month of the year, the correct height of window shades within a standard deviation of two inches would be noted. An audiometer measures the decibal output of the class to determine the control situation and would probably accept a reasonably high range, recording "animated discussion" before the needle plunged into the red zone signaling "loss of control." Those who regulate the machine would no doubt point to the liberal tolerance for noise as evidence that the computer has indeed been humanistically programmed.

Another audio device traces the patterns of discussion. It already has a copy of the teacher's and students' voiceprints and is able to provide a profile of classroom talk and evidence that the teacher was or was not conducting a reasonable give-and-take discussion. The same device could record rising and falling pitches and produce the ratio of questions to statements, but because content analysis has not yet been perfected, it would be impossible to tell whether the discussion revolved around the fate of mankind or a missing ballpoint pen.

Each seat is wired with delicate sensors measuring body temperature, blood pressure, pulse rate, and evidence of perspiration. Those who nag about "affect" are readily satisfied with a detailed graph of each student's rising and falling emotional state—all synchronized to a videotape (in color) of what happened or didn't happen in class.

Compositions are objectively evaluated by computer which counts the number of words, clauses, sentences, and key syntactic structures and instantly compares them with national or local norms. It assigns a grade and provides each student with intelligent comments, suggestions and an individual homework assignment.

Our scenario is not quite finished. After all of the results are statistically analyzed and correlated (10 seconds after the bell ending the period) the teacher is notified via computer printout just before she leaves for the next class how well or how poorly she did—and how much will be added or deducted from her next paycheck.

I have by no means exhausted all of the possibilities. Surely people in this room could make some imaginative suggestions for further classroom uses of the computerized systems approach. It should be noted that all of the technology mentioned in our little fantasy is available (some of it at The University of Connecticut), and awaits only purchase and installation. Any takers?

Let us go one step further: One way to solve the whole problem of teacher training, certification, and performance would be to capitalize not only on the recording and evaluating talents of computers, but on their stimuli generating possibilities. Linked to tape decks, television screens, electric typewriters, computers can talk to students, show them pictures, and write a response to their response. So who needs teachers? Reason suggests that a lot of money would be saved and much agonizing controversy avoided were the imperfect, subjective teacher replaced by the objective, no-nonsense computer. I have little doubt that those in the vanguard of the behavioral systems movement will very soon see the logic—indeed the wisdom of my suggestions. And when they do, teacher training programs will reap some of the benefits. By a simple change in word order teacher training programs will be converted to *Programmed* Teacher Training. Our jobs will change from preparing human beings (admittedly a messy job) to preparing machines for the classroom.

The present phase of preparing lists of competencies, performance characteristics, and behavioral outcomes corresponds to the paper programmed instruction of the fifties and early sixties. Programmed instruction has already been computerized. Enterprising educational planners will very soon, put the behavioral objectives on computers and automatically check their performance or non-performance with sensing devices. It is a relatively small step from lists to punch cards and from clearly delineated human behavior to computer simulation of human behavior.

Still, fun and games aside, there are reasonable opposing arguments. They maintain that we had better see to it that included in the list of behavioral objectives and evidences of competency are those that we can live with—that we had better not abdicate the task to the eager tribe of educational psychologists and to the machanics within our own ranks only too anxious to do the job.

The assumption here is that humanistic and affective outcomes can be delineated with the required precision and can be verified in performance. Our professional training, the argument continues, is in a sense, a program of objectives that we have internalized as we evaluate teachers and students. For a long time now, it has been a cliche' among supervisors to say "I don't look at what the teachers are doing but at what the students are doing." Why not clarify and codify those students behaviors that signal good teaching? Why not eliminate the idosyncratic, the impressionistic, and record for all to see those behaviors that reflect changes

in the knowledge, attitude, and feeling resulting from experiences in a classroom? Those who can demonstrate their ability to so move students should be certified; those who cannot should be turned away from teaching.

The opposing group, however, insists that the campaign for behavioral objectives and performance-based teacher education is really the counter-offensive of the educational and political right, that it is an elaborate promotional pitch supported by the trappings of pseudo-system's scientism whose behavioral objective is a return to narrowly defined basic skills and abandonment of the issue-value-affect-centered education only recently come to life in our schools. Certainly we are, and will be, encouraged to make lists (and lists, and lists) of a range of *affective* outcomes—both for prospective teachers and for students—but the expectation is that the low state of the measurement-evaluation art will demand that teachers and teacher trainers focus on the obvious and on the pedestrian, on what most easily and clearly demonstrates ability to modify the behavior of students. Gresham's Law rides again as the bad drives out the good. Each teacher in the classroom and each teacher trainer in his class is, in effect, thrown into the role of performance contractor, teaching for the narrowly defined test or objective, hoping for, the rewards of success and dreading the penalties of failure.

Opponents of the systems approach in education point to its disastrous employment in Vietnam. The overall behavioral task was to win the war—a more humanistic objective was thrown in to appease the naggers and the doubters: to win the hearts and minds of the people. Those in the field who were to accomplish the tasks found the results of their efforts to win over the people were too difficult to measure and the little hard data they were able to gather too difficult to interpret. They concentrated instead where their efforts would show hard, verifiable outcomes—and the bigger body count became the favored criterion indicating that the objectives were in hand. It should be noted that the men in the field made special efforts to give those in charge what they wanted, by juggling numbers or killing those who were not even involved in combat. There are lessons for us here, I think.

The lists of behavioral objectives and performance criteria and reports of their successful accomplishment were all fed into the computer whose printout insisted the campaign was just about won. Is it possible that all over the country the systems approach will encourage and intimidate those on the educational battle field to commit perjuries and atrocities in the name of behavioral outcomes?

Other questions demand answers. What about performance-based certification for administrators? What will be appropriate behavioral outcomes for them? As those ultimately responsible for the school program, will state department people be judged on the performance of those who attend the schools? Will their success or failure be determined by fluctuations in the reading rate, the dropout rate, the college entrance

rate, the attacks on teachers rate, the teacher resignation rate, the rate of friendly and unfriendly telephone calls and letters from principals and professors around the state? Certainly, any member of a state department of education or any administrator who creates and implements a program without extensive consultation with those who are to be profoundly affected by it, has already flunked the performance test and should receive a computer typed letter indicating his services are no longer required.

So much for the "passing reference" to *performance based teacher* education.

Let me spend just a very few minutes telling you about our program at The University of Connecticut. There are variants of what we do at other institutions—Temple University, Trenton State and Towson State Colleges and others I don't know about.

We assume that anything important about the teaching of English will be learned, better yet, become part of teaching behavior, on site, in schools, as a result of working with kids.

After identifying a school with a better than average program and an outstanding department chairman, we suggest that the school become a teaching center to which we will send each semester up to six student-teachers. The department chairman takes on the role of methods instructor and gives two method sessions a week which are basically responses to what happened, what didn't happen, what could have happened in the classes taught by the student-teachers. Because he knows the program, the cooperating teachers, the high school students and sees the student-teachers daily, the department chairman also undertakes the role of the University supervisor. He observes each of the student-teachers once a week and feeds his observations into the methods class. For these services, over a twelve week semester, the University pays him 600 dollars and considers him to be part of its faculty.

The money saved on mileage and part time supervisors makes this program truly innovative, because it costs no money. Meanwhile back at the University the professor of English education has taken on a new role—that of curriculum consultant for the school. He brings materials to show and to try, talks to the English department about alternative ways of teaching English, joins the methods session run by the department chairmen, attends conferences with student-teachers, cooperating teachers, and department chairman.

We have, in effect, given over English teacher education to the schools while maintaining a pipeline between school and college. Moreover, these new definitions of roles have done away with the old resentments and divided loyalties.

A hidden but very potent dividend accruing from this scheme is the in-service possibility for the participating cooperating teachers. Given six student-teachers, the department chairman is justified in asking their

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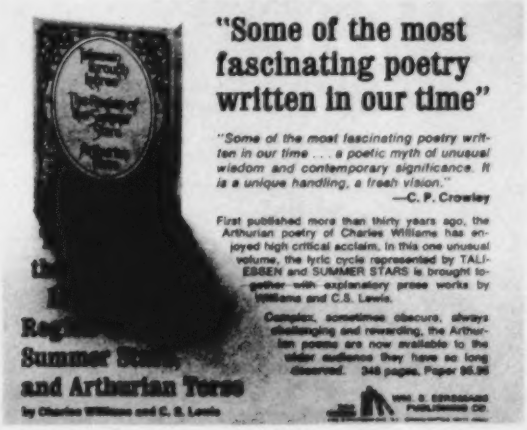
twelve cooperating teachers to get together to discuss and work out reasonable experiences for the prospective teachers. What the department chairman is really doing is beginning an in-service program in the context of the pre-service activity. What the cooperating teachers will talk about in such "preparatory" sessions are *their* views of what English instruction should be and what they do in their classes — the beginning of in-service activity.

The University, then, contributes the student-teachers, a curriculum consultant, payment to the department chairmen and cooperating teachers, and an opportunity to get with it and open up their program. The school contributes places for six student teachers and release time for the department chairmen. That very briefly, is how we handle English teacher education at The University of Connecticut.

Now, at the close of my talk, I am embarrassed at what I must say. An unimpeachable source has informed me that the program committee of this organization has instituted a new performance-based evaluation of the guest speaker, whose honorarium will depend on the hard, positive behavioral evidences testifying to his guest-speaking competence. A small but fanatic consortium of evaluators has been cleverly concealed among you, and they are even now preparing to measure and record your affective and cognitive behavior. Suffice to say that what you do at the end of this talk is rather important to me. Inner passion doesn't count, nor does unverifiable intellectual activity. I urge you, for the sake of my wife and two little children, to smile a lot during the next ten or fifteen minutes. Those among you with beards might stroke them reflectively. I understand that this will be viewed as evidence of profound thought. Also, I am open to hearty slaps on the back — considered to be a very significant sign by the evaluation team.

And in case things don't work out, can I hitch a ride with someone heading in the direction of Connecticut?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